THE BEST STORIES BY THE BEST AUTHORS. ILLUSTRATED BY THE BEST ARTISTS.

SHORT STORIES

EDITED BY C. ARTHUR PEARSON (OF PEARSON'S WEEKLY)

No. 355. FOR WEEK ENDING OCTOBER 19TH, 1895. [ONE PENNY.

RISING SUN STOVE POLISH
EASIEST, QUICKEST, CHEAPEST, & BEST BLACKLEAD IN THE WORLD

Risin' Sun METAL POLISH
Gives a beautiful soft brilliant polish to all kinds of Metal.

THREE GREAT BOONS

1 A sample of any one post free 2 stamps. *Name this publication*
C. CHANCELLOR & CO. London, E.C.

3 MACK'S DOUBLE STARCH
CONTAINS IN PROPER PROPORTIONS GLOSS, BORAX, GUM, WAX, & &c

100 YEARS' WORLD-WIDE RECORD OF SUCCESS.

NORTON'S CAMOMILE PILLS

INDIGESTION BILIOUSNESS HEADACHE
STOMACH & LIVER COMPLAINTS DEBILITY

THE BEST OF ALL TONICS and a GENTLE APERIENT. Mild in Operation, Perfectly Safe, and Free from Injurious Drugs. Sold Everywhere in Bottles at 1/1½, 2/9, and 11/- each.

Ask for "NORTON'S CAMOMILE PILLS," and do not be persuaded to purchase an imitation.

Prepared by NORTON'S, Limited. 21, Spital Square, London, E.

Trade Mark—One Little Bottle.

A SIGNAL SUCCESS.

"'Tis not in mortals to command success, but we'll do more, Sempronius, we'll deserve it."

THE PEARSON POTTERY COMPANY, Hanley

Are Selling Fast the most Wonderful Package of Crockery in the World.

100 PIECES

FOR £1 1s.

A beautiful Dinner Service of 50 pieces is guaranteed **Worth the Guinea alone**, consequently a Charming China Tea Service, and a useful Collection of Crockery, are given **FOR NOTHING.** Thousands sold all over the world. Everybody not only satisfied but amazed at the quantity and quality given. **The Secret of the Success.**—THE PEARSON POTTERY COMPANY are manufacturers, not middlemen, like many other advertisers. The PEARSON POTTERIES have nearly 2,000 feet frontage to the town of Hanley. Hundreds of these packages are applied for as **Wedding or Birthday Presents.** And what more useful present can be given? Every item is useful. *The Thirty Shilling Bazaar Parcel is selling well. Apply at once.* Send a Post Card for Particulars. You will never regret it. Freedom from breakage guaranteed. All letters to the

PEARSON POTTERY COMPANY, HANLEY.

"STRONGEST AND BEST."—*Health.*

FRY'S *Pure Concentrated* COCOA

Highest Honours, Chicago, 1893. | Over 100 Prize Medals and Diplomas.

Purchasers should ask specially for FRY'S PURE CONCENTRATED COCOA *to distinguish it from other varieties manufactured by the Firm.*

Digitized by Google

MASON'S

EXTRACT OF HERBS

For the Immediate Production of

BOTANIC BEER.

A Nine-gallon Cask of Alcoholic Beer from a Brewery will cost you 10/6, but Eight Gallons of Beer made from

Mason's

EXTRACT of HERBS

Can be obtained for 6d., plus a pound or two of Sugar and a little Yeast.

THE

FINEST BEVERAGE IN THE WORLD.

Inventors and Manufacturers:

Newball & Mason,

HYSON GREEN WORKS,

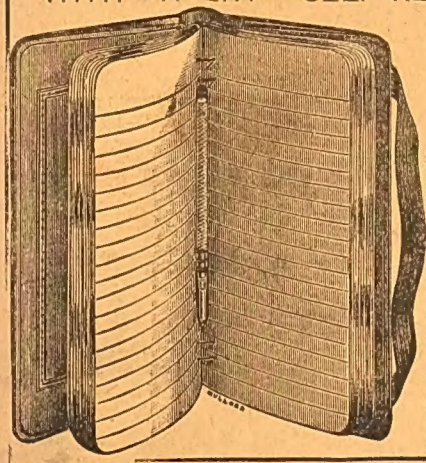
Nottingham.

If unable to obtain it in your neighbourhood, send 9 stamps for sample bottle; or samples of both Wine Essence and Extract of Herbs, post free for 15 stamps.

COLLINS'

"AYE, READY!" NOTE-BOOK.

WITH PATENT "SELF-REGISTER."



THE HANDIEST AND THE BEST. THE SIMPLEST AND THE CHEAPEST.

As will be seen from the Illustration, this Note-Book has a hollow "rest" cut into the back, into which the Pencil falls and is securely held, while by means of an ingenious contrivance called a "Self-Register," the person using the Book can at once open it where he was last writing. A reference to any page in the front, the middle, or the end is also materially assisted by the "Self-Register."

In Leather Bindings, Round Corners, Gilt Edges, from 1s. upwards, or with Re-fills from 3s. 6d. to 10s. 6d.

WM. COLLINS, SONS & CO., LIMITED,
Bridewell Place, London, E.C.;
139, Stirling Road, Glasgow.

Defective Digestion.

Defective Digestion produces faulty Assimilation, and bad Assimilation means impoverished Blood; and the body as a whole suffers, no function being properly performed. Guy's Tonic, by ensuring good Digestion and equally good Assimilation, produces rich blood making, and in this way invigorates and renovates the entire organism. Guy's Tonic is speedy in its operation, and above all things pre-eminently safe. Every Dyspeptic should take Guy's Tonic. If they would but do this, the disease would be speedily rooted out.

A Notable Discovery.

One of the most brilliant discoveries in modern medicine was the inception of the formula of Guy's Tonic. This noble medicine has been the means of blessing to thousands. As a remedy for Dyspepsia, Impoverished Blood, Torpidity of the Stomach, Liver, Alimentary Canal, the Kidneys and the Skin, it stands unrivalled; whilst in all cases of Debility, Nervous Depression, and Enfeebled Conditions of the System, its action is most prompt and gratifying. It is recommended by Medical Men, and should find a place in every well-ordered household.

Guy's Tonic is sold by Chemists everywhere.

"WORTH A GUINEA A BOX."

BEECHAM'S PILLS

FOR ALL

BILIOUS & NERVOUS DISORDERS,

SUCH AS

Sick Headache, Constipation,
Weak Stomach, Impaired Digestion,
Disordered Liver & Female Ailments.

ANNUAL SALE SIX MILLION BOXES.

In Boxes, 9½d., 1s. 1½d., and 2s. 9d. each, with full directions.

Prepared only by the Proprietor,

THOMAS BEECHAM, St. Helens, Lancashire.

Sold by all Druggists and Patent Medicine Dealers everywhere.

Digitized by Google

ONE PENNY

SHORT STORIES.

EDITED BY

C. ARTHUR PEARSON.

No. 385.] [ONE PENNY.

For the Week ending October 19th, 1895.

LOVE ROMANCE WAR ADVENTURE FUN PATHOS

A Suspended Elopement.

I HAD loved Bella for more than a year. When I say that I was over twenty-five, my readers of the sterner sex will, I am sure, be impressed by my constancy.

Bella had money. Not that this had, of course, anything to do with my extraordinary devotion, but it served for a time to be the barrier to our happiness. I first met and fell a victim to Bella's charms when her mother was alive. Her father had then been dead several years. The old lady took to me. I have a knack of getting on with old ladies. This is a very useful gift when they are well off, and are the mothers of lovely daughters. I advise all young men to cultivate it. The main point is always to be more attentive to the mother than the daughter.

All was working smoothly for Bella and myself, when cruel Fate, in the shape of a drunken bus-driver, crushed the mother under its Juggernautian wheels. We prosecuted the driver, and an intelligent jury, largely influenced by the wealth of the bus company, decided that pedestrians have no rights which bus drivers are bound to respect.

It turned out that, by her father's will, Bella, in the event of her mother's death, was, until her twenty-first year, to be placed under the guardianship of an uncle, who was a farmer. This same uncle had two great hulking sons, and determined that Bella should marry one or the other. Indeed, he believed he was acting most kindly in giving her a choice, instead of insisting on her taking the first-born.

When old Green found out that I had come into the neighbourhood, and was hanging about the premises, he sternly warned me off, and even hinted at the fierceness and number of the dogs which populated his yard at night. I took his word for the dogs—it was about the only thing I would have taken it for.

Bella was virtually a prisoner. The old farmhouse was three storeys high—a very unusual thing in that part of the country—and she was locked in at night in her room on the top floor. With great difficulty I managed to get one or two letters to her; but so closely was she watched and guarded during the day that speech with her was impossible. I was in despair. There

All rights reserved.]

Digitized by Google

was yet a year to run before she could claim release from this guardianship. Was there no means of escape possible?

While I was pondering over this question in the little hotel where I had now been staying some weeks, I heard a strange voice addressed to the proprietor in loud tones, and I distinctly caught the words "portable fire-escape." Instantly an inspiration flashed through my mind. I joined the party, and in doing so heard these words:

"It's just the simplest thing in the world. A two-year-old baby couldn't hurt itself. No, sir, it would like to have one for a plaything, and would amuse itself all day hauling itself to the top of the house and letting itself down again. They're so light and easy that when folks don't want escapes I often sells them as baby-jumpers. Just try one; it's only 22s. 6d. Make it 20s. to you, as an advertisement, seeing you keeps a hotel, and you ought to have one for the protection of your guests."

"No. My place is only two storeys high, and if we have a fire they can jump out or burn, just as they please." And the careful hotel-keeper strolled off.

"What have you there, my friend?" I asked of the stranger.

"A portable fire-escape. Simplest thing in the world. But I was a fool to come to this place. There isn't a house high enough for a man to hurt himself much if he rolled off the roof."

"I'll tell you how you can sell one escape for twenty shillings."

"You will!"

I unfolded my plot, and found a sympathetic listener. He was to go up to Bella's uncle's house, and try to sell an escape. Of course, we knew that would be perfectly hopeless. So, after being rebuffed, he was to insist on leaving one on trial for a week or two, till he came round again. He was also to try to smuggle a letter to Bella, explaining that she was at night to get possession of the escape, attach it to her bedstead, and slide down into my expectant arms, which would be waiting as near as the dogs would let them. On the night she was ready, she was to signal in a certain way with a candle at the window.

The pedlar started off, and soon returned, having been successful in getting the letter to Bella, and having given an exhibition of how to use the escape. For several nights I waited in vain for the signal, but at last it was shown. I did not hear the dogs about, and I gently crept nearly under the window. It was opened.

"Are you there, Bella?" I whispered.

"Yes."

"You're not afraid, dear?"

"Not very. I've tied the end round the bedstead, and I don't think I can slip out of the loops. Have you a trap waiting?"

"Yes, dear; at the first turn of the road."

"Very well. I am going to try now. Oh!"

She had launched herself off from the side, and was descending beautifully.

"Don't come too fast, dear. Use the check rope if you feel you are coming too quickly."

She had got to the second floor, when there was an unaccountable stoppage.

"What's the matter?" I cried.

"It won't move."

"Shake the rope."

"I have."

"Loosen the check."

"It is quite loose."

"Try to pull up a bit."

"I can't; I'm stuck fast."

"Let me shake the rope."

"Try! Oh! oh! it's no use, it won't move."

"Can't you slip out of the loop and slide down the rope? I'll catch you."

"No, I can't. I am sitting in it, and can't get out. Oh, what's to be done?"

"I'll try to climb up and see."

Bella sat dangling in the air, like Mohammed's coffin, between heaven and earth.

I tried to climb, but the rope was not half an inch thick, and I slipped back. Then came the tragic sequel. There was a rush of something behind me, and a bulldog seized me in that part which had been nearest to him as he approached. I have heard of soldiers riddled with bullets, or almost cut to pieces by swords and bayonets, who have still advanced upon the enemy. I don't believe they could have done it with a bulldog hanging on rearward. If any one of my male readers doubts this aspersion of man's courage let him get an angry bulldog and try.

Other dogs began to give tongue. Bella screamed. Lights were seen moving in the house.

"Go!" she cried. "They will kill you if they find you."

"But I could not leave you, Bella." I must own this was not true. I was leaving her in small sections down the dog's throat, and I felt I must run away.

"Go; save yourself."

By a convulsive effort I shook off the dog, a considerable portion of my trousers, and a couple of good mouthfuls of my anatomy, and bounded over a wall and up a tree. From there I watched the triumphant brothers haul Bella into a second storey window. Then they came out and began to look for me. I am happy to say they were unsuccessful. About two hours afterwards I ventured to limp home.

Bella never tried to elope again. She remained proof against all the arguments of her uncle and the charms of his boys, and when she became legally her own mistress, she became mine legally, too.

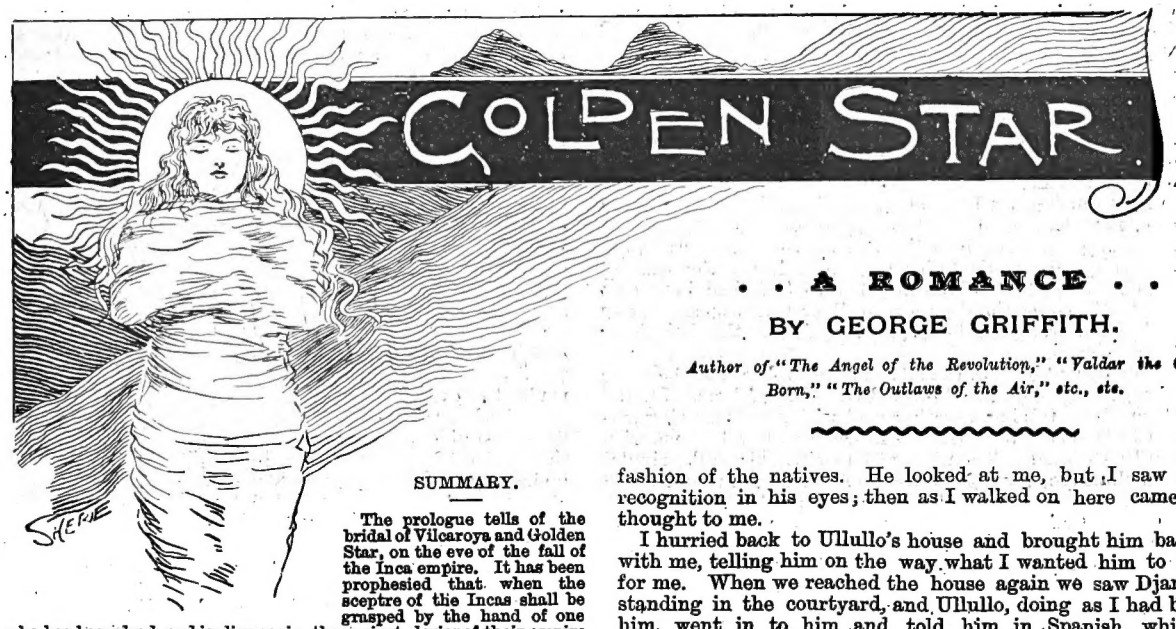
I never saw that fire-escape man again. Perhaps it was better for him I didn't. He never called for his machine. Possibly he heard something of the story in his travels.

I don't know that there is any moral to this tale, except never to use a rope fire-escape for an elopement. There must have been something pathetic in the instinct of the author of the old song when he wrote:

When a lady elopes
Down a ladder of ropes,
She may go to Hong-Kong for me.

Julian Magnus.

Digitized by Google



. . A ROMANCE . .

BY GEORGE GRIFFITH.

Author of "The Angel of the Revolution," "Valdar the Oft-Born," "The Outlaws of the Air," etc., etc.

SUMMARY.

The prologue tells of the bridal of Vilcaroya and Golden Star, on the eve of the fall of the Inca empire. It has been prophesied that when the sceptre of the Incas shall be grasped by the hand of one who has been dead, and is alive again, the ancient glories of their empire shall be restored, and they dare the ordeal together. Three hundred years later Professor Martin Lamson brings to England a mummy from Peru. Laurens Djama undertakes to restore it to animation. The mummy is removed to Djama's laboratory, and in a week he shows the Professor his mummy alive. They learn that he is the Vilcaroya of the legend. He promises them that if they will restore Golden Star to life he will give them untold treasures. Six months later the party embark for Peru. They meet in Panama a friend of Professor Lamson, Captain Hartness, who joins their party. On the way Hartness is told the whole story, and throws in his lot with the Inca. With Book II. begins Vilcaroya's personal narrative of his return to his own country. He enters into communication with the Ayllos, the remnant of the old Inca nobility, and commissions one of them, Tupac-Rayca, to meet him at night on the plain of the Rodadero, behind the Great Fortress, with twenty Men of the Blood, to see the proof of his mission. The same evening at dinner he accidentally reveals the fact that Golden Star is his sister as well as his bride, and, after Ruth has left the room in horror at this revelation, the Professor and Hartness show him how impossible such a union is in the modern world. He then goes out to think and prepare himself for his night's work.

CHAPTER XI.

On the Rodadero.

As it still wanted more than three hours to the time of my meeting Tupac and those he was to bring with him on the plain of the Rodadero, as it is now called, I had plenty of time before me to ponder the to me strange and fateful words that I had heard at our dinner-table. I went first to Ullullo's house and changed my clothing so that I might the more readily lose myself among the hundreds of Indians about the streets of the city, for something told me that Djama might make an attempt to discover the meaning of what I had said about the house by following me and learning, if possible, the secret of my movements; for he must have known that being without money, as I was, save for the few dollars that the Professor had lent me, it would not be possible for me to do as I had said unless one at least of the hiding-places of the old treasures was within easy reach, so that I could take sufficient gold out of it by the next day to fulfil my promise.

When I changed my clothes I put a dagger into my belt and a revolver, which Francis Hartness had already taught me how to use, into a case slung at my hip and hidden by my jacket and the long folds of my poncho. Then I went back into the great square and across it up the street in which we had our lodgings. As I passed the house I saw Djama standing in the archway leading into the courtyard smoking a cigar. I turned and looked him in the face as I went by, slouching and trailing my sandalled feet after the fashion of the natives. He looked at me, but I saw no recognition in his eyes; then as I walked on here came a thought to me.

I hurried back to Ullullo's house and brought him back with me, telling him on the way what I wanted him to do for me. When we reached the house again we saw Djama standing in the courtyard, and Ullullo, doing as I had bid him, went in to him and told him in Spanish, which I could not speak, that if he would give him ten dollars he should learn the secret of my goings and comings, and where I was to find the gold with which to pay for the hacienda. Djama instantly promised him the money, as I thought he would, and Ullullo told him to be at the end of the street, which is now called El Triunfo, at eleven o'clock that night. He was to come alone, for if any one came with him he would learn nothing. As you will soon see, I had two objects to serve in doing this.

I saw Djama standing in the archway.

When Ullullo came back and told me that Djama would be there, I told him to wait for me at the same place and hour, and then I went away alone out of the city and up a path which led towards the mountains to the north. There alone and in silence I communed with my own soul, at first in sorrow, yet slowly becoming more and more peaceful in heart, even as one who is told that he is to die on a certain day first rages against his doom, and then learns to contemplate with calmness that which there is no hope of escaping. The words of the Professor and Francis Hartness had shown me that in the world to which I had returned my sister, Golden Star, could now never be my wife and queen, and the more I pondered on what they had said, the more plainly it appeared to me that this was the truth, however bitter it might seem.

Yet there was something else in my heart, although at that time I did not dare even to let my inmost thoughts dwell upon it, which in some way dulled the pain of the blow that had fallen upon me, and reconciled me to the parting which in one sense must now be eternal. The longer I pondered the more deeply did that look of horror

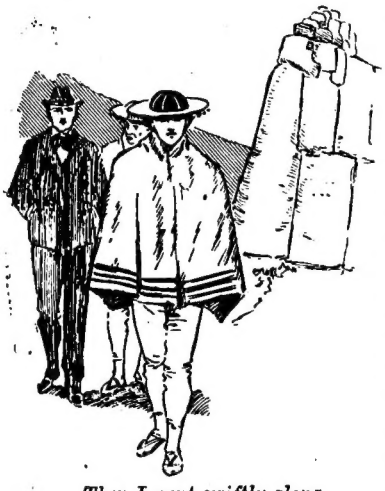
Digitized by Google

which I had seen in the eyes of Joyful Star burn into my soul, and the more clearly did the words that she had said ring in my ears. She had said that it was horrible, and that it was impossible, and she was to me as one of those bright angels who, according to our ancient faith, awaited the heroes and sages of our race in the Mansions of the Sun—a being so far above me that I could look upon her only as a mortal might look from afar upon the daughters of the celestials.

Thus musing in silence and solitude on the wild mountain side, now looking back into my distant past, and now hazarding a glance into the fast approaching future, the hours slipped by quickly for me, and I heard the bells of the churches—bells which they had told me had been cast out of the copper and gold and silver that the conquerors had taken from our temples and palaces—the half hour before eleven.

So I turned back to the city, and made haste to the place where Djama and Ullullo would be waiting for me. I found them there talking together, and without discovering myself to Djama, I told Ullullo in Quichua to follow me with the Englishman. Then I went on swiftly along the rivulet of Tullamayo, past the terrace of Rocca Inca, and along the smooth dark wall of what had once been the Yachahuasi, or College of the Youths, and so out of the city and the gorge of the little river Rodadero. Then, with the two still following me a few yards behind, I climbed the lower terraces of the Colcompata, or the Granaries, where the divine Manco-Capac built his first palace, and then on up the hillside to the Tiupunco, or Gate of Sand, which led through the fragments of what had once been the outer wall of the great fortress, and so on to the little level pampa of the Rodadero, which was my meeting place with Tupac.

Now as I went I began to sing one of our ancient songs, which was the signal that I had agreed upon with Tupac, and presently, one after another, silent, stealthy forms crept out from the angles of the great zig-zag wall and came towards me. One of them, taller than the rest, threw an iron bar that he was carrying across his shoulders, and came and stood before me with bowed-down head, waiting for me to speak. I knew that it was Tupac, and I said to him:



Then I went swiftly along.

"Are the Children of the Sun ready to do the bidding of His Son?"

"They are, lord," he replied. "Here are twenty who have sworn by the heart of the divine Manco to do all things lawful and unlawful, even to the death, at the bidding of him who shall prove himself to be the true heir of the royal Llautu."

"It is well," I said, "and the proof shall soon be given. Now take the stranger yonder; do him no harm, but bind his eyes so that he cannot see, and tie his hands behind him. Then follow me."

Instantly the stealthy forms closed around Djama. Not a word was spoken save his startled, angry exclamation, which was soon stifled, and then they brought him along after me, I going first and Tupac following close behind me. Like a string of shadows we moved across the plain past the great carved rock which is still called the Inca's Seat, and over the ridge of the Sliding Stones and down into the valley beyond, which is thickly strewn with great rock masses carved into seats, and altars, and baths, and chambers, of which no man knows the origin, and which were ancient when Manco-Capac and Mama-Occlu first came into the land.

They brought him along after me.

The greatest of these is a high white rock carved all over into steps, and seats, and altars, and basins, which are said to have been made to catch the blood of the living sacrifices that were offered up here by a race of men whose name has been forgotten. It is called in our language the Sayacusca, or Tired Stone, for an old tradition says that ages ago it was brought from the mountains by the toil of ten thousand men, and when it reached its present place it rolled over and killed three hundred of them, and could never be moved again upon its journey.

On the south side of this there is a great cleft from the top to the bottom, and up the sides of this cleft are the two halves of a stairway, which was carved there before some earthquake rent the stone in twain, and under this is a deep dark pool of water. At the entrance to the cleft I stopped and beckoned to the others to come round me. Then I told them that they were about to see that which no man then alive on earth had ever seen, and made all swear by the Glory of the Sun that each and every one of them would slay without pity him who revealed anything seen or heard that night, even though he were his own brother, or his own father, or his own son. As for Djama, they held him there bound and blindfolded amongst them, and when he tried to speak they stopped his mouth at my bidding, for I told them that I would be answerable for him since I had brought him here for my own purposes.

Then I made two of the men stretch a cord tightly across the mouth of the cleft close down to the ground, and to the middle of this I tied another cord, and stretched it out straight twelve foot-lengths from the centre, and here I bade them clear away the bushes and dig. Then axe, and hoe, and spade went to work. In that clear air, and under that cloudless sky, the stars gave light enough to work by, and soon a space had been cleared, and a round hole about three feet across was being dug down through the loose, rocky soil. When it was about half the depth of a man, the spades struck on the living rock below, and could go no farther. When Tupac told me of this, I, who had been standing by the cleft, looking—full of strange thoughts—down into the dark pool of water, called the man who had been digging out of the hole, and, taking an iron bar from Tupac, I dropped it into it.

I sought about the bottom with my hands for a few moments till I found the outline of a squared stone that had been let into the rock. In the centre of this I found a hole, out of which I picked the dirt with my dagger. Then, putting the end of my iron bar into it, I pulled, and the stone turned over on a hinge, leaving an opening half its size. Down this I thrust my arm, and found a chain of copper which hung down into a deep well below. I pulled this with all my strength until something gave way at the

Digitized by Google

bottom, then I drew the chain up, and cast my iron bar under it across the hole. As I did this, I heard the deep smothered roar of waters rushing away far below me into the bowels of the earth.

Taking an iron bar from Tupac, I dropped it into it.

Then I got out of the hole and went back to the cleft. I lit a candle, and looked down at the pool. It was no longer stagnant now, but seething and eddying like a whirlpool. I beckoned to Tupac, who was standing a little way behind me, and as he came and looked over my shoulder I pointed down into the dark gulf, out of which the bottom was rapidly falling, and said:

"See, the waters are opening the way by which the Son of the Sun shall go into his kingdom. Watch now and listen."

"Son of the Sun and Lord of the Four Regions, it is true," he whispered, as the waters eddied round faster and faster, and gurgled and rattled down into some unknown abyss. Soon they vanished altogether, leaving only a dark, black, and seemingly fathomless cavern in the place where they had been. I waited until the sound of the last gurgle had died away in the distance, and then I turned to Tupac, and said:

"The way is open. Tell Ullullo to bring the lantern and light it. There must be no other light. You and the rest follow me, and let two strong men bring the stranger."

He did as I bade him, and when I had lit the lantern I cast its rays about the gulf beneath me till I found the continuation of the broken stairway above, and then, picking my way carefully down the dank, slimy steps, I led the way into the heart of the rock, the rest following, guided by the spreading ray of light in front of me. I counted fifty steps, and then stopped and turned sharply to the right. The fiftieth step ended against a wall of rock, still dripping with the water that was running down from the arched roof of the chamber. I measured ten spans with my hand from the wall where the steps ended, and made a mark with my dagger on the rock. Then from the floor I measured eight spans in a line across the mark. Where the eighth span ended I made another mark, and, with the help of my lantern, I found a silver socket let into the rock. It was a plate with a hole in the centre large enough to admit the iron bar which I had brought for the purpose. I put it in, and, whispering to Tupac to help me, we gripped the bar, and, after two or three hard pulls, felt it coming towards us. A great slab of rock, which fitted into the wall with all the perfection that our old Inca masons could give it, turned on a central hinge, leaving a space that two men could have walked through abreast.

I led the way into the heart of the rock.

"Go in," I said to Tupac, "and let all follow you."

He obeyed, and standing by the opening, with a ray of my lantern shooting across it, I watched them file past one by one until all had gone in. Then I followed, and, as I crossed the threshold, set my shoulder against the edge of the slab and pushed it back into its place.

CHAPTER XII.

The Hall of Gold.

Now I covered my lantern with my poncho and cried aloud in the darkness:

"Let the torches be got ready, but let no light be struck till that which is to be revealed may be seen."

A low murmur answered me, and then, still keeping my lantern hidden, I felt my way along the wall, treading softly as a mountain lion approaching its prey, until I had counted forty paces. The fortieth brought me to a doorway, through which I turned. Five paces more brought me to another turning, ten more to the end of the passage, and then I uncovered my light, and found myself in a little square chamber hewn out of the rock and surrounded with stone chests covered with lids of copper.

In the centre of the chamber stood a smaller one, all of metal. I set my lantern down on one of the others so that the light fell across this one; then I raised the lid, and there before me lay, perfect as they had been on the day when Anda-Huillac, last High Priest of the Sun, had laid them there, the imperial robes and insignia that had last been worn by the ill-fated Huascar, son of the great Huayni-Capac. Quickly throwing off the mean garments that I wore, I dressed myself in them. Then, binding the golden sandals on my feet, and clasping the long mantle emblazoned in gold and jewels with the symbols of the Sun and his sister-wife the Moon across my shoulders, I wound the scarlet Llautu around my head with the crimson fringe of the Borla interlaced with gold falling upon my brow, and then closing the chest I took up my lantern and went back along the passages I had traversed.

In the middle of the last one I put my lantern down with the glass against the wall, and feeling my way into the doorway which opened on to the chamber in which the others were awaiting me, I cried in a voice that echoed strangely through the great chamber:

"Let the torches be kindled, and let the Children of the Sun look upon their lord."

I heard a scuffling of feet and a whispering of many voices. Then lights were struck, and I stepped back quickly into the shadow of the doorway. I saw the glow of light grow into a glare that was flashed back in a thousand many-coloured rays from the walls of the chamber. I heard a deep low cry of wonder, and then I strode out into the midst and said:

"I am he who went into the shadows at the bidding of our Father the Sun, and by His will I have returned to bring deliverance to His children."

For one moment of affrighted amazement they stared wide-eyed at me standing there before them as though Huayni-Capac himself had returned from the Mansions of the Sun to resume his sceptre and his crown. Then with one accord they sank on their knees before me, holding their torches above their bent heads and murmuring:

"Hail Son of the Sun and deliverer of His children, who hast come to bring the daylight back to the long darkened Land of the Four Regions."

I looked at them, and saw Djama standing erect still bound and blindfold in the midst of them. I went through the kneeling forms to him, and, taking the bandage from

Digitized by Google

his eyes, stepped back, and, while he was blinking at the light of the torches, said to him in English:

"Look about you, Laurens Djama, and tell me if you believe now that I, the friend of the filthy Indians whom you despise, can do that which I have said?"

Still half dazzled by the glare of the torches and the thousand rays of many colours that were flashed back from all sides, he stared about him. Wherever his wondering glance fell it saw great golden plates covering the walls, thick set with jewels, and in front of him, piled up against the end wall of the chamber, a shining heap of golden bars built up in the shape of a pyramid reaching to the roof of the chamber, and on either side of this, half way up, was a great image of the sun like to that which in the olden times stood above the altar in the sanctuary of the great temple of Cuzco, each with its centre fashioned as a human face with great flashing diamonds for eyes, with lips of rubies, and long pendants of emeralds hanging from the ears and all round a hundred curving rays of gold edged and lined with jewels.

He stared about him open-eyed and open-mouthed with amazement. Then his eyes fell on me, and he started forward and stared me in the face for a moment. Then he gasped:

"Vilcaroya, is it you, or am I dreaming? Where have you brought me to?"

"To one of the treasure-houses that you so longed to see," I said, "so that you might see and believe that I told you no idle tale, and that I can perform my promise if you can perform yours."

Then I turned my back on him and went to the foot of the pyramid. In front of it stood the golden throne from which twenty generations of Incas, my forefathers, had given laws to their people. I, the last of their sons, sat down upon it and said to those who still knelt before me in silence:

"Hail, Son of the Sun!"

"Let those of His children who are faithful to their Father, the Sun, rise and come without falsehood in their hearts, and say if they now believe that that which was foretold long ago when the darkness fell over the land, has in very truth come to pass."

They rose from their knees and came towards me in a half circle, carrying their torches. They stopped about five paces from the throne, looking at me through a little space with wondering eyes full of worship. Then they bowed their heads again, and Tupac came from the midst of them, and, casting himself prone at my feet, yet not daring even to touch my sandals, said in a broken voice:

"Son of the Sun, heir of heaven and lord of earth, we have seen thy wisdom and thy majesty. None but one of thy royal line, nay, none but thee, oh, Vilcaroya, Son of Huayni-Capac, and Brother of Huascar, last of the Incas, could have known the secret that thou hast brought with thee from the past into the present. We are thy children and thy slaves, and all the men of the Blood that are left in the Land of the Four Regions shall hail thee lord as we do, and own no other master save thee, Vilcaroya Inca, from now until the hour when their father, the Lord of Life, shall call them back to the Mansions of the Sun. We are thine, and we will serve thee, ourselves and our wives and our children, as our fathers served thy father in the days when there was yet peace and happiness in the land."

"And if ye are but faithful," I said, "and if the Lord, my father, who rules the day, and his sister, my mother, who rules the night, shall give me strength and wisdom to use the power that is mine, I will give you back peace and happiness, and the stranger and the oppressor shall be driven from the land and the homes of the Children of the Sun shall again be full of light. Rise now, Tupac, and let ten of the men give their torches to the others and make ready to do my bidding."

He rose, and it was done. Then I called Djama to me and said:

"What you have seen here to-night is a dream. When your eyes open again on the outer world, remember what I have said. Your hand has brought me from the grave to the throne, and you must obey me as these do. Let me but know that you have spoken one word, even to Joyful Star herself, concerning what you have seen here to-night, and I will show you how an Inca deals with one who dares to disobey him. Keep silence, and have patience, and perform that which you have promised, and you shall go back to your own land loaded with gold and jewels. Fail, and the fragments of your body shall be sent north and south and east and west throughout the Land of the Four Regions, and your name shall be one of shame in the ears of my people for ever."

For a moment he looked me in the eyes, and I saw his lips moving as though he was striving to shape some answer to my words. Then his face grew grey, and his knees shook as he stood. Then I called to Tupac, and bade him bind his eyes again and lead him away, and as soon as his sight was taken from him I bade the ten men who had given up their torches take off their ponchos and fill them with as many of the golden bars as each one could carry, and when this was done I ordered all the torches save one to be extinguished. This one I took, and went with it into the passage where I had left my lantern. Then I dashed it against the wall and vanished into the darkness.

I took my lantern, and, hiding the light carefully, went back to the little chamber, where I took off my robes and sandals and the imperial Llautu, and put them back into the chest. Then I put on my mean attire again and went back into the Hall of Gold. Signing to the others to follow me, I turned the stone door on its pivot again, and watched them file past me as before. Then, going out last, I closed the portal after me and lighted them up the steps with my lantern.

When we all once more stood in the open air by the cleft I went to the hole and released the chain. Instantly the roar of waters broke out again, and I bade them fill the hole up and put turf over it, and trample it down and scatter the bushes over it; and, that being done, we took our way back again across the plain towards the fortress, still leading Djama blindfold in our midst.

We took him by the gate of Viracocha into the fortress, across its upper part where the three crosses stood, and down on to the zigzag road which leads into the eastern

Digitized by Google

part of the city, and there we unbound his eyes, and I bade him go to the house and make ready to receive me early in the morning, telling our friends that I should arrive with some packages of Indian merchandise and metals from one of my mines, for, as I should have told you before, I had come to Cuzco in the same character as that in which I had first been introduced to Francis Hartness—an owner of mines who had lived long in Europe and had come back to supervise the working of my property.

I and Tupac and his companions then went back into the hills, and, without entering the city, made our way by twos and threes into the village of San Sebastian. We met at Tupac's house, and there I explained to them as much of my plans and purposes as I thought fit for them to know, and showed them that the time was not yet come for them to make use of the treasures that I would share with them. But to each man I gave two pounds' weight of gold to be left in Tupac's care till it could be taken into the cities of the south and there changed for silver coins. Then I had a list made of their names, and promised them, after reminding them of their oaths, that when I once more sat on the throne of the divine Manco, their fidelity should be well remembered.

The next morning we loaded the gold in bales of the coca leaf, great quantities of which are taken every day into Cuzco, upon four mules, and of these I sent to our house while I went back with Ullullo and put on my English clothing. Then I followed, and found that the bags of coca had already arrived. They were carried up to my own room, and there, in the presence of Djama and Joyful Star, the Professor and Francis Hartness, I took out the gold ingots and built them up in a pyramid before them.

I could see from their amazement that, whether from fear or faith, Djama had obeyed me, and said nothing of what he had seen during the night. As for me, I said but little. I gave them the gold, and that day the Professor and Djama, acting as my agents, sold it to some of the merchants of Cuzco as the product of my mines. The price was more than twice as much as was needed for the hacienda, so with the rest I discharged my debt and made myself once more a free man.

There is no need for me to dwell upon our dealings with the owner of the hacienda, and, therefore, it will suffice for me to say, before ten days more had passed, the purchase money had been paid, we had taken up our abode there, and installed Joyful Star as housewife with faithful servants chosen by myself from among the children of the blood. Djama, who had been strangely silent and reserved with all of us since the lesson I had taught him in the Hall of Gold, had taken possession of the chamber which was devoted to his uses, and had put all his apparatus in order for the great work that was to be done there.

So on the fourteenth day, such was the power of my gold and of my longings, all things were ready, and at daybreak on the fifteenth day we rode, at the head of our little mule-train, out of the courtyard of the hacienda on our way to the resting-place of Golden Star.

(To be continued.)

NOW ON SALE,

The First Number of a new Weekly Paper, called:

PEARSON'S

Story Teller.

It consists wholly of continued stories. The opening chapters of eight entirely new novels appear in the first number.

A GRAND OFFER

TO READERS OF THE

STORY TELLER.

PEARSON'S WEEKLY will give, for a period of thirty days from October 9, a **BEAUTIFUL ¾-LIFE-SIZE INDIA INK AND CRAYON PORTRAIT** *FREE* to anyone who will bring or send them only 5s. and four consecutive coupons from THE STORY TELLER.

These portraits are of the finest artistic merit. They are absolutely permanent, being finished by the Air Brush, with indelible India Ink, making them more permanent than any of the old styles of portraits, and they will last a life-time.

They would cost you, if ordered through Artists, from Three to Five Guineas!

Have you FATHER, MOTHER, SISTER, BROTHER, or CHILD'S photo that you wish enlarged—perhaps some dear one who has passed away, whose likeness is now fading, and should be preserved before it is too late. We will enlarge and copy it into a beautiful portrait for you. Remember these portraits are *Absolutely Free* so far as we are concerned.

HOW CAN WE DO THIS?

We will tell you. We wish THE STORY TELLER to have a very large circulation such as it deserves. We know of no method whereby we can serve our subscribers better, and which will prove more popular, than by making the offer we now do. We expect to make many thousands of portraits.

SHALL WE MAKE YOURS?

You will get an unheard-of bargain by availing yourself of this grand offer, and we are glad to be able to give it to you. We can copy from any photos., large or small, tintypes, or any kind of glass picture. We copy all pictures bust style—head and shoulders only.

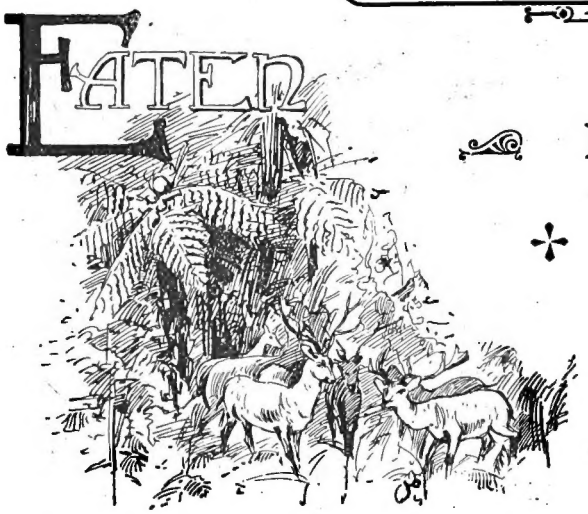
When Sending an Order, inclose the picture you want copied in an envelope, and place your name and address on the back of the picture, and send the 5s. and four consecutive coupons from THE STORY TELLER to our paper, and you will receive the portrait copied for you as soon as possible. Have no fear of losing your small picture. It will be returned in as good order as received.

An example of the portrait we offer to give you can be seen at the Offices of P.W.

Address:—PORTRAITS,
Pearson's Weekly Bldgs., Henrietta St., London. W.C.

Digitized by Google

EATEN BY A TREE



Before committing this paper to the ridicule of the readers of *Short Stories*—for many, I fear, will be inclined to regard this story as incredible—I would venture on the expression of an opinion regarding credulity, which I do not remember to have met before. It is this. Placing supreme Wisdom and supreme Unwisdom at two extremes, and myself in the exact mean between them, I am surprised to find that, whether I travel towards the one extreme or the other, the credulity of those I meet increases. To put it as a paradox—*whether a man be more foolish or wiser than I am, he is more credulous.* I make this remark to point out to those whose notice it may have escaped, that credulity is not of itself shameful or contemptible, and that it depends upon the manner rather than the matter of their belief whether they gravitate towards the sage or the reverse way. According, therefore, to the incredibility found in the following, the reader may measure, as pleases him, his wisdom or his unwisdom:

Many years ago I turned my restless steps towards Central Africa, and made the journey from where the Senegal empties itself into the Atlantic, to the Nile, skirting the Great Desert, and reaching Nubia on my way to the eastern coast.

I had with me then three native attendants—two of them brothers, the third, Otona, a young savage from the gaboon uplands, a mere lad in his teens; and one day, leaving my mule with the two men, who were pitching my tent for the night, I went on with my gun, the boy accompanying me towards a fern forest which I saw in the distance.

As I approached it I found the forest was cut into two by a wide glade; and, seeing a small herd of the common antelope—an excellent beast in the pot—browsing along the shaded side, I crept after them. Though ignorant of their real danger the herd was suspicious, and, slowly trotting along before me, enticed me for a mile or more along the verge of the fern growths.

Turning a corner I suddenly became aware of a solitary tree growing in the middle of the glade—one tree alone. It struck me at once that I had never seen a tree exactly like it before; but, being intent upon venison for my supper, I looked at it only long enough to satisfy my first surprise at seeing a single plant of such rich growth flourishing luxuriantly in a spot where only the harsh fern-canes seemed to thrive.

The deer, meanwhile, were midway between me and the tree, and looking at them I saw they were going to cross the glade. Exactly opposite them was an opening in the forest, in which I should certainly have lost my supper; so I fired into the middle of the family as they were filing before me. I hit a young fawn, and the rest of the herd, wheeling round in their terror, made off in the direction of the tree, leaving the fawn struggling on the ground.

Otona, the boy, ran forward at my order to secure it, but the little creature seeing him coming, attempted to follow its comrades, and at a fair pace held on their course. The herd had meanwhile reached the tree, but suddenly, instead of passing under it, swerved in their career, and swept round it at some yards distance.

Was I mad, or did the tree really try to catch the deer? On a sudden I saw, or thought I saw, the tree violently agitated, and while the ferns all round were standing motionless in the still evening air, its boughs were swayed by some sudden impulse towards the herd, and swept almost to the ground. I drew my hand across my eyes, closed them for a moment, and looked again. The tree was as motionless as myself!

Towards it, and now close to it, the boy was running in excited pursuit of the fawn. He stretched out his hands to catch the animal. It bounded from his eager grasp. Again he reached forward, and again it escaped him. There was another rush forward, and the next instant boy and deer were beneath the tree.

And now there was no mistaking what I saw.

The tree was convulsed with motion. It leant forward, swept its thick-foliaged boughs to the ground, and enveloped from my sight the pursuer and the pursued: I was within a hundred yards, and the cry of Otona from the midst of the tree came to me in all the clearness of its agony. There was then one stifled scream, and except for the agitation of the leaves where they had closed upon the boy, there was not a sign of life.

I called out "Otona"! No answer came. I tried to call out again, but my utterance was like that of some wild beast smitten at once with sudden terror and its death-wound. I stood there, changed from all semblance of a human being. Not all the terrors of earth together could have made me take my eye from the awful plant, or my foot off the ground. I must have stood thus for at least an hour, for the shadows had crept out from the forest half across the glade before that hideous paroxysm of fear left me.

My first impulse then was to creep stealthily away,

Digitized by Google

lest the tree should perceive me, but my returning reason bade me approach it. The boy might have fallen into the lair of some beast of prey, or it might be the terrible life in the tree was that of some great serpent among its branches. Preparing to defend myself, I approached the silent tree, the harsh grass crisping beneath my feet with a strange loudness, the cicadas in the forest shrilling till the air seemed throbbing round me with waves of sound. The terrible truth was soon before me in all its awful novelty.

The vegetable first discovered my presence at about fifty yards distance. I then became aware of a stealthy motion among the thick-lipped leaves, reminding me of some wild beast slowly gathering itself up from a long sleep, a vast coil of snakes in restless motion. Have you ever seen bees hanging from a bough—a great cluster of bodies, bee clinging to bee—and by striking the bough or agitating the air, caused that massed life to begin sulkily to disintegrate, each insect asserting its individual right to move? And do you remember how, without one bee leaving the cluster, the whole became gradually instinct with sullen life, and horrid with multitudinous motion?

When I came within twenty yards of it, the tree was quivering through every branch, muttering for blood, and, helpless with rooted feet, yearning with every branch towards me. It was that terror of the deep sea which the men of the northern fjords dread, and which, anchored upon some sunken rock, stretches into space its longing arms, pellucid as the sea itself, and as relentless.

Each separate leaf was agitated and hungry. Like hands they fumbled together, their fleshy palms curling upon themselves and again unfolding, closing on each other and falling apart again—thick, helpless, fingerless hands (rather lips or tongues than hands), dimpled closely with little cup-like hollows. I approached nearer and nearer, step by step, till I saw that these soft horrors were all of them in motion, opening and closing incessantly.

I was now within ten yards of the farthest reaching bough. Every part of it was hysterical with excitement. The agitation of its members was awful—sickening yet fascinating. In an ecstasy of eagerness for the food so near them, the leaves turned upon each other. Two, meeting, would suck together face to face, with a force that compressed their joint thickness to a half, thinning the two leaves into one; and at last, faint with the violence of the paroxysm, would separate, falling apart as leeches gorged drop off the limbs.

A sticky dew glistened in the dimples, welled over, and trickled down the leaf. The sound of it dripping from leaf to leaf made it seem as if the tree were muttering to itself. The beautiful golden fruit as they swung here and there were clutched now by one leaf, and now by another, held for a moment close enfolded from the sight, and then as suddenly released.

I watched the terrible struggle till my starting eyes, strained by intense attention, refused their office, and I can hardly say what I saw. But the tree before me seemed to have become a live beast. Above me, I felt conscious, was a great limb, and each of its thousand clammy hands reached downward towards me, fumbling. It strained, shivered, rocked, and heaved. It flung itself about in despair. The boughs, tantalised to madness with the presence of flesh, were tossed to this side and to that, in the agony of a frantic desire. The leaves were wrung together as the hands of one driven to madness by sudden misery. I felt the vile dew spurting from the tense veins fall upon me. My clothes began to give out a strange odour.

Was I bewildered by terror? Had my senses abandoned me in my need? I know not—but the tree seemed to me to be alive. Leaning over towards me, it seemed to be pulling up its roots from the softened ground, and to be moving. A mountainous monster, with myriad lips, mumbling together for my life, was upon me!

Like one who desperately defends himself from imminent death, I made an effort for life, and fired my gun at the approaching horror. To my dazed senses the sound seemed far off, but the shock of the recoil partially recalled me to myself, and starting back, I reloaded. The shot had torn their way into the soft body of the great thing. The trunk, as it received the wound, shuddered, and the whole tree was struck with a sudden quiver. A fruit fell down—slipping from the leaves, now rigid with swollen veins, as from carven foliage.

Then I saw a large arm slowly droop, and without a sound it was severed from the juice-fattened bole, and sank down softly, noiselessly, through the glistening leaves. I fired again, and another vile fragment was powerless—*dead*. At each discharge the terrible vegetable yielded a life. Piecemeal I attacked it, killing here a leaf and there a branch. My fury increased with the slaughter till, when my ammunition was exhausted, the giant was left a wreck—as if some hurricane had torn through it.

On the ground lay heaped together the fragments, struggling, rising, gasping, and falling. Over them drooped in dying languor a few stricken boughs, while upright in the midst stood, dripping at every joint, the glistening trunk.

My continued firing had brought up one of my men on my mule. He dared not (so he told me) come near me, thinking me mad. I had now drawn my hunting knife, and with this was fighting with the leaves. But each leaf was instinct with a horrid life; and more than once I felt my hand entangled for a moment, and seized as if by sharp lips. Ignorant of the presence of my companion, I made a rush forward over the fallen foliage, and with a last paroxysm of frenzy, drove my knife up to the handle into the soft bole, and, slipping on the fast congealing sap, fell exhausted and unconscious, among the still panting leaves.

My companion carried me back to the camp, and after vainly searching for Otona, awaited my return to consciousness. Two or three hours elapsed before I could speak, and several days before I could approach the terrible thing. My men would not go near it. It was quite dead; for as we came up, a great-billed bird, with gaudy plumage, that had been securely feasting on the decaying fruit, flew up from the wreck.

We removed the rotting foliage, and there among the dead leaves, still limp with juices, and piled round the roots, we found the ghastly relics of many former meals, and—its last nourishment—the corpse of little Otona. To have removed the leaves would have taken too long, so we buried the body, as it was, with a hundred vampire leaves still clinging to it.

Peter Parr.

First Number of the New Series of
FOOTLIGHT FAVOURITES
WILL BE PUBLISHED ON
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 25th.

Digitized by Google

Forged = Together.

A WILD TALE OF THE MUTUAL HATRED OF TWO CONVICTS.

I AM French by birth, and my name is François Thierry. I will not burden you with my early history, but will begin by stating that I was sent to the galleys, and find myself to-day in exile. Branding was not out of date at that time, and until my death I shall bear some fiery letters on my shoulder.

I was arrested, registered, condemned, and sent to Paris. As I left the court of justice, my terrible sentence rang in my ears. On the long road from Paris to Bicètre—all day and all night—till we arrived at Toulon, the dull rolling of the prison waggon on the pavement repeated it to me. When I look back to that time, I think I must have been stunned by the unexpected severity of my doom, for I have not the slightest recollection of the particulars of that journey. "Hard labour for life!" "Hard labour for life!" I heard nothing else. Late in the afternoon of the third day the waggon stopped, the door was unlocked, and I was led through a paved court into a hall that was but faintly lighted. Here an officer asked me my name, which he entered in a large book, banded with iron as though it were fettered.

"No. 207!" cried the officer, "green!"

Then I was led into another room, where I put on the uniform of a galley slave. From this moment I lost my individuality. I was no longer François Thierry, but No. 207. The officer was present while I was dressing.

"Hurry up!" he said; "it is getting late, and you must be married before dinner."

"Married?" I repeated.

He laughed as he lit a cigar. I was again led through another corridor into a damp court, where wild-looking men, with clanking chains, were walking up and down before the muzzles of cannon.

"Bring No. 206," cried the officer, "and then call the priest." No. 206 came in, dragging a heavy chain behind him, and with him a robust blacksmith.

The ring of an iron chain was put round my ankle, and forged together with a single stroke of the hammer. A like ring bound me to my companion. Each stroke re-echoed through the arches like the scornful laugh of demons. The officer drew a small red book from his pocket, and said:

"No. 207, listen to our prison laws: If you attempt flight and fail, you will be bastinadoed. If you succeed in getting to the harbour and are there captured, you will be doubly chained for three years. As soon as you are missed three cannon-shots will be fired and signals of alarm will be hoisted on each bastion. Telegraphic messages will be sent to the harbour-guards and to the police throughout France."

After the officer had read this with a terrible satisfaction, he re-lit his cigar, put the book away, and left the hall. I was now a prisoner forged to another prisoner. As I looked at him I found his eyes turned towards me. He was a sinister-looking fellow, about forty years old, not any taller than I, but of herculean build.

"Then you, too, are in for life?" he said.

"How do you know that?" I exclaimed angrily.

"I can tell by your cap—green is for life. Why are you here?"

"I conspired against the Government."

He shrugged his shoulders contemptuously. "Then you're an elegant one. We other prisoners hate such aristocratic company."

I made no answer.

"This is the fourth time that I've been here," continued my companion. "Perhaps you have heard of Gasparo, the counterfeiter?"

I had heard of the daring criminal, and drew back tremblingly from his gaze. An uneasy look in his eyes told me that he noticed my shrinking.

From that moment he hated me. Gasparo and I, with two hundred other prisoners, were put to work in a stone quarry on the other side of the harbour. Day after day, week after week, from sunrise to sunset, the rock resounded to our blows. Thus spring and summer passed and autumn came.

My fellow-prisoner was a Piedmontese. He had been a thief, counterfeiter, incendiary, and when he last fled from prison he committed a murder. Heaven only knows how my sufferings were intensified through this terrible comradeship. How I shrank from the touch of his hand. What loathing took possession of me when I felt his breath on my face at night.

I tried to overcome this aversion; but in vain. He knew it as well as I, and took every opportunity to revenge himself in such ways, as only a depraved mind can think of. However, it could have been of no avail to put myself in opposition to him, and any complaint to the overseer would only have provoked the wretch to worse tyranny.

At last there came a day when his hate seemed to diminish. He allowed me my night's rest, and seemed to be in a hurry. The next morning, shortly after we had begun work, he came close to me, and whispered in my ear:

"Do you want to escape?"

I felt the blood rush to my face, and could not say a word.

"Can you keep a secret?" he went on.

"Until death!"

"Well, then, listen: To-morrow Marshal d'Auvergne will inspect the docks, harbour, prison, and stone-quarry. Salutes will be fired from the walls and ships, which will make it difficult to hear the guard's signal for two escaping prisoners. Do you understand me?"

"Yes."

"What, then, will be easier than to knock off the fetters with the pick-axe, and escape when the overseer is not looking our way? Will you dare?"

"With my life!"

"Your hand."

Digitized by Google

I had never before touched his blood-stained hand, and could not refrain from shuddering as I clasped it. The next morning we had to undergo an inspection before going to work. An hour before noon the first salutes from the harbour reached our ears. The dull report went through me like an electric spark. Gasparo whispered to me:

"When the first shot is fired from the barracks, strike with your pick-axe on the first ring of my chain close to the ankle."

A sudden suspicion came over me. "And if I should do it, how can I be sure that you will then free me? No, Gasparo; you must strike the first blow."

"As you say," he answered smilingly.

At that moment a flash came from the barracks, and then a report that reverberated a hundred times from the rocks. As the echo rolled over our heads I saw him get ready to strike, and felt my chain fall. Hardly had the thunder of the first shot died away before the second came. Now I was to free Gasparo. I was less dexterous than he, so it took several strokes to free the chain. At the third shot we threw away our caps, climbed up the rock, and struck for a path that led into the valley. Suddenly, at a sharp bend in the road, we stood before a little guard-house, in front of which were two soldiers. They pointed their guns at us, and ordered us to surrender. Gasparo turned towards me, struck me heavily, and said:

"There, stay, and let them capture you. You always were a thorn in my path."

As I fell I saw Gasparo throw down one soldier and rush towards the other. Then a shot, and all was dark and still around me.

When I opened my eyes, I found myself lying on the floor of a little unfurnished room, but faintly lighted by a small window. I arose with pain, and, leaning against the wall, tried to think. The recollection of my last adventure soon came to me. Probably I was in one of the upper rooms of the guard-house. I crept to the door and found it locked. The little window was about four feet above my head. I succeeded in reaching it and looking out.

The rock rose about forty feet from the house, and a brook ran between me and the cliff.

To stay here would be ruin, whereas in daring farther lay a possibility of escape. I forced myself through the small window, dropped down, and crept towards the brook. The water in the stream came to my waist; but as both banks were high, I could walk along in it without my head showing.

I soon heard distant voices, and raising my head carefully over the bank of the stream, I saw silent figures moving towards me.

Suddenly a dark lantern was turned on the bank close by my hiding-place. I dived under the water and held my breath until it seemed that the veins in my head would burst. When I could bear it no longer I rose again, took breath, looked around me, and listened. All was still. My pursuers had gone. I then climbed the bank on to the stony path. Wind and rain in my face, I strode rapidly on with no other leader than the storm.

About five o'clock in the morning, as day began to dawn, I heard bells ringing, and saw a large city in front of me. Not daring to go any farther, I sought shelter in some thick shrubbery near the road. When night came on I continued my journey; but hunger soon drove me into a small village on the road. I crept softly between the cottages and knocked on the minister's door. He opened it himself, and I told him my story. He gave me something to eat and drink, an old coat in exchange for mine, and a few francs.

On the fifth day after my flight from Toulon I reached Italian ground. I begged my way from place to place until I arrived in Rome, where I hoped to find occupation, if not friends. I hired a small room, rested a few days, and then eagerly sought work. Evening after evening I returned disappointed. The little money which I had begged melted away. At last I could not pay my landlord, and he turned me out into the streets. Mechanically I followed the stream of passers-by, which led me to St. Peter's. I crept in wearily, and sank down in the shadow of the large doors. Two men stood near me reading a poster that was hanging on one of the columns.

"Merciful heavens," said one, "how can a man risk his life for a few lire?"

"And with the certain knowledge that out of eighty men, eight or ten fall and break their necks?" said his companion.

"Horrible work."

They passed on and were lost in the crowd.

I sprang up eagerly and read the notice. It was headed, "Illumination of St. Peter's," and made known that eighty men were wanted to light the lamps on the dome, and three hundred to light those on the columns. I went to the manager, had my name put on the list, received half my money down, and was to present myself there at eleven o'clock the next morning. I was there promptly, amid a crowd of miserable-looking men. The doors of the office were soon opened, and we crowded into the hall. My eyes seemed to be drawn to one corner of the room. My heart stood still—it was no mistake—I had recognised Gasparo. I went over towards him, and, touching him, said:

"Gasparo, don't you know me?"

He raised himself up lazily, and said: "Ah, François! I thought you were in Toulon."

"I can't thank you that I'm not there. Listen to me. If we both outlive this night you shall give me satisfaction for your perfidy."

He looked indifferently at me, and lay down to sleep. At seven o'clock we were all called up, and climbed the stairs that led to the dome. My place was about halfway up, and I saw Gasparo go up still higher. When we were all ready, we crept through the windows up to small boards hanging by ropes. Each one was given a lighted torch, with which he was to light the lamps that he passed as the ropes were let down. After I had lit all my lamps, I looked round at the scene. Suddenly I felt my rope shake, and looking up, saw a man putting his torch to it. It was Gasparo! With the agility of a cat I climbed up the rope, put my torch in the villain's face, and caught hold of the rope above the place where it was on fire.

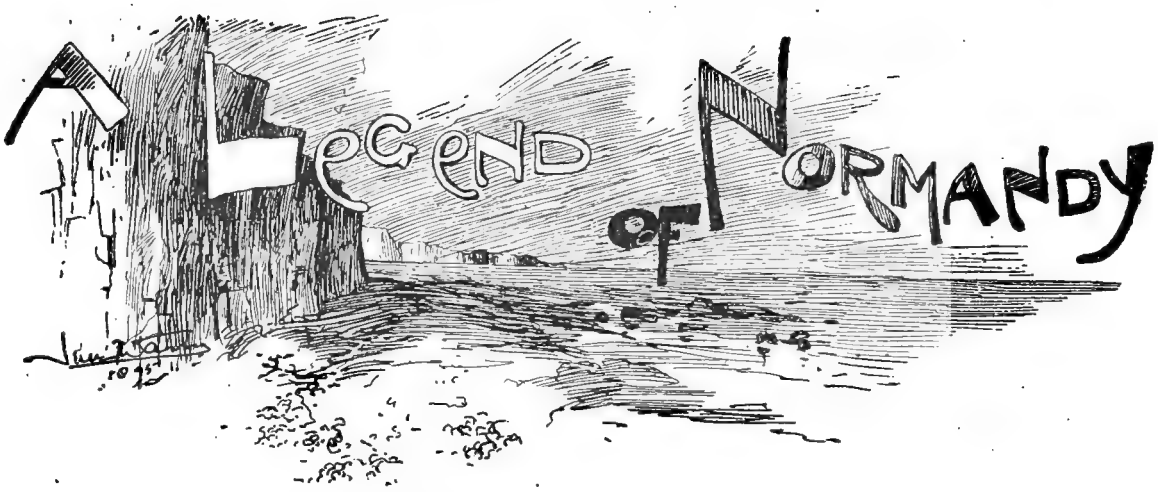
Gasparo, blinded and wild with pain, gave a terrible yell and rolled down like a stone. Through all the humming of the living ocean beneath I heard the dull thud as my enemy struck the pavement. I had hardly recovered my breath when we were drawn up into safety again.

I told the director what I had gone through. The truth of my story was proved by the half-burned rope, and I was given money enough to leave Rome.

Since then I have had many adventures, but never found myself in such terrible company as on the dome of St. Peter's on that fatal Easter.

H. Morse.

Digitized by Google



It is June. A clear, fresh, early summer morning. Along the coast of Northern France the sun glitters over the golden sands; a fresh breeze tickles the laughing foliage of the trees and flicks the rank grass on the low salt marshes into some semblance of life. The last vestige of the soft gossamer mist has lifted and floated away into the nothingness of the deep blue atmosphere. The silver veil has been torn asunder and reveals the great conical rock of Mont St. Michel with the narrow outline of the Abbey pinioned 500 feet above the *grèves*.

At this point of vantage two men are standing in the deep embrasure of the window of the Salle des Gardes. They are both young, and appear to be strangers to each other, for although they came through the low menacing entrance together and mounted the broad stone steps side by side, neither of them spoke. A single glance is enough to satisfy the observer that they belong to different nationalities. The taller, and perhaps the younger of the two, is English. His companion is unmistakably French.

The stone-flagged chamber in which they find themselves seems deliciously cool after the heat of the steep ascent from below. Here formerly the vassals of the monastery assembled on solemn occasions. To-day it is sombre enough to strike a chill into the boldest heart. On the foot of the grand staircase behind, the *concierge* is sitting, beating a monotonous tattoo with his keys. He is waiting until the party is increased before he commences once more the weary *rôle* of showman.

From the window a bird's-eye view is obtained of picturesque tiled houses, tangled gardens, and broken walls overgrown with vines and coloured here and there with brilliant patches of deep pink wall flowers, climbing over one another down the rock.

The Englishman, who had been standing on the stone seat and looking out with the keen relish of an artist, now gives a little whistle of mingled surprise and delight. Two figures are mounting the winding stairway from ramparts which are green and bronze with moss and lichen. To improve matters they are both ladies, and one of them young and, even at that distance, pretty. He feels his spirits rising. They are English undoubtedly, and it is nearly a month since he has heard his own tongue spoken. He waits with some impatience till they enter and pass on to the porter's lodge to inquire for a guide. Undoubtedly the girl *is* pretty. She is wearing a straw hat, a neat fawn-coloured suit, and a white shirt with a stiff collar and well-tied bow—facts which the Englishman takes in with considerable satisfaction, for his first impression that she is a fellow-countryman seems confirmed.

The new-comers cannot rouse the *concierge* from his apathy. They come over and stand by the window. Neither of them look in the Englishman's direction; they do not seem aware of his presence.

At this he feels slightly offended. His insular prejudices return. He has no right to force his attentions on these ladies, and no intention of doing so if they are likely to prove unacceptable. He looks at the elderly lady, and decides two things. First, she is the pretty girl's mother; secondly, it is her place to open a conversation. He glances at the slim figure in the fawn-coloured suit. She is gazing down through the window which he has vacated, and apparently has no curiosity to know anything about him whatever. The brown hair, with the faintest colouring of auburn, is ravishingly beautiful as a sheet of light falls through the opening upon it. Only a glimpse of her neck and the bare suggestion of a soft, rounded cheek is visible from where he stands, but if he had not already seen her face instinct would have told him that it was the back of a pretty woman.

He shrugs his shoulders and turns away from the picture. Even to hear the musical voice, which he knows must lurk behind those full rose lips, he is not going to run the risk of a snubbing.

He begins striding up and down impatiently. The *concierge* has apparently fallen asleep. Presently he passes through one of the gateways which lead from the Salle des Gardes and begins exploring a gloomy passage which takes one to what were once the stables of the Knights of Mont St. Michel. When he comes back he finds the Frenchman has entered into conversation with the two ladies.

At this he tugs at his moustache and frowns.

"Confounded impudence," he mutters, and begins pacing up and down again.

They are talking in French. After listening for a moment, without understanding a word, he comes to the conclusion that the girl and her mother are French. They are talking quickly, and gesticulating with the ease and piquant expression of a native. This does not improve the young man's temper. He feels disappointed and annoyed.

Digitized by Google

Presently the guide gets up with a start. He looks out of the door, peeps through the window, and finding no one else in sight begins to lead the way up the grand staircase. The Englishman walks alone; the other three go together.

Occasionally he takes a surreptitious glance at the girl. Once, just as the top of the stairs is reached, their eyes meet. It is only for a second, but he feels his heart beating a little faster. There is a piquant charm in the quiet, self-possessed face; an unfathomable depth in the large grey eyes.

The girl turns away and addresses some remark to her companion in English. The man hears this and starts. Yet it was palpably done for effect; intended so very evidently for him to hear, that the Englishman takes no notice.

"She knows a few words of English and wants to display her learning," he thinks uncharitably, and goes on by himself.

Presently the whole party emerge on the parapet in front of the church itself. Quite a wind is blowing up here. The place is littered with scaffolding and boards belonging to the builders who are executing some repairs inside. To see the view properly it is necessary to climb over this lumber. The Englishman relents a little and holds out his hand to the girl although he does not say anything. She shakes her head and declines with a bright smile which makes him anxious again to get on more friendly terms. He secretly hopes that she will fall or sprain her ankle or have to seek his assistance after all; he says to himself that he hates independence in girls, but he cannot help admiring the nimble way in which she climbs about.

Sees the object of his thoughts standing at his elbow.

All around a glorious stretch of blue sea rapidly encroaching on the glistening sands is to be seen. Here and there fishermen with their nets over their shoulders are hurrying back to terra firma looking like ants crawling over the *grèves*. The dark rock of Tombeline is already surrounded by water; immediately below them, the steep sides of the mount honeycombed with sombre crypts and secret dungeons, and a little to the right, the rugged sides are covered with tangled green stuff, shrubs and trees.

The others have entered the church, and the Englishman determines to say something—anything—only something to find out to what nationality his companion belongs. She has turned away and is examining the elaborate carving over the doorway.

"Evidently she finds that more interesting than me," thinks the Englishman, taking out his watch and deciding that sight-seeing is decidedly dull.

He approaches the girl, and at the same instant she enters the building and joins the others.

Thereupon the young man begins to call himself names. He takes no interest in the details of the architecture. One quick glance is all that he requires. It seems ages before the others exhaust the wonders of the nave with its aisles and clerestory. At last they all emerge into the famous cloisters. From the gloom of the dismantled church it was a relief to emerge into the brilliant sunshine of the open court, hundreds of feet above the miniature world below, surrounded on all four sides with a triple row of more than two hundred columns, sheltered with a little roof of red, yellow, and dark blue tiles. The whole effect is indescribably light and beautiful. The Englishman goes over to the outer wall and takes another glance at the savage precipice below and the fairy scene around. He becomes conscious that someone is looking over his shoulder.

"How lovely it is up here," he exclaims, but whether he is addressing himself or anyone who is listening it is impossible to say.

"That's a fact," says a pretty, silvery voice at his elbow, with just the suspicion of a drawl. "I would like to live right here for ever."

He turns quickly and sees the object of his thoughts standing at his elbow.

"Which means you are an American," he says, with a laugh.

"Why, certainly. I have been wondering what nationality you were."

The Englishman feels flattered. So she has condescended to give him a thought after all.

"I saw you leaning out of the window as we came up, and I told mamma I thought you looked like an Englishman," she goes on with engaging frankness; "I have been waiting to hear you talk."

The last words are uttered with a little *moue*, and she lays a slight emphasis on the word "waiting," which makes the Englishman feel somewhat guilty.

"I thought you were French," he explains hastily. He feels like biting his tongue out the moment he has spoken, for he is dimly conscious that this may not be taken as a compliment, and he has an idea that there is an angry gleam in those grey eyes which are surveying him with a calm scrutiny.

"Oh, spare me!"

"I mean from the way you speak," he goes on in some confusion, and then breaks off lamely.

The girl colours a little. French is not one of her strong points, and she has a dim idea that this good-looking Englishman is making fun of her. It seems likely for a moment that a coolness will spring up between them, for the American says something about keeping the others waiting and goes off down the arcade, leaving the Hon. Charlie Winter to follow.

He has half a mind to stay where he is, but he does not mean to be deprived of her society so soon, and strolls leisurely after her.

"You don't know what a pleasure it is to hear one's own language again," he says humbly, as he overtakes her at the corner. "One gets so tired of speaking in

Digitized by Google

gestures, and understanding other people by signs and wonders. What a beautiful place this is."

"Yes; perfectly charming. I am just longing to go round in a boat."

The Honourable Charlie laughs.

"Are you?" he responded. "Perhaps we might go together if we ever get down from here," and he shoots a quick glance at her sweet mobile features, as if half expecting to see that little pout appear again at his presumption.

However, she merely smiles, and laughs back at him. The Frenchman turns round at this moment and winks solemnly; there is an envious gleam in his eye, as if he would gladly have changed places, and "swapped" the mother for the daughter.

"No doubt he would," thinks the Honourable Charlie, pulling his moustache. The Englishman has taken a new interest in sight seeing. Dawdling, which irritated him before, now seems an occupation for the gods, and even exploring the terrible dungeons below the crypt has its special attractions.

By the time all the wonders of the Mount are exhausted, the sea has closed in on every side, and nothing but the low granite dyke, stretching like some great sea serpent to the shore, prevents the island from being entirely cut off from the mainland.

There is still an hour before lunch, and the Honourable Charlie offers to charter a boat from a fisherman, and secretly hopes that the old lady is a bad sailor, and will not come. In this, however, he is disappointed. To make matters worse, his offer to assist his divinity over the rocks is laughingly refused and he has the mortification of seeing her intrusting herself to the boatman to be carried through the water to where the little craft is anchored. He thinks to himself that he would have given a five pound note to exchange places with that man.

Brushing back the rebellious waves of hair.

He manages, however, to get her to himself in the bow of the boat which a man and a boy propel with huge oars through the water. It is a wonderful sight this massive pile of rock crowned with its abbey fortress and as they round the corner and come in sight of the little town clinging to the precipitous slopes, the houses among the green vines and figs and encircled by the solid belt of ramparts and massive buttresses defying the invasion of the sea, both are lost in wonder. Across the glittering water the green coast of Normandy forms one side of a gigantic bay; and land and sea and rock are all bathed in a glorious flood of sunshine.

The Honourable Charlie looks up at his companion. She is smiling and her hands are clasped enthusiastically. He fancies her cheeks are a little flushed.

"This afternoon we might walk round on the sands if you like," he ventures.

"Unfortunately we are going away directly after *déjeuner*," is the disappointing answer, "otherwise I should have been delighted. They are dreadfully dangerous are they not?"

The Englishman nods. His face has fallen a little at her announcement, but clears again the next moment as he says:

"Where are you going to? St. Malo?"

"No, Coutances."

"I am sorry. I thought, at least I hoped, that we might see some more of each other."

The girl shot a quick glance over her shoulder. Her mother sitting in the stern with the Frenchman is out of sight. She leans a little towards her companion and whispers something which makes him utter a little exclamation of surprise.

"And you are travelling alone?" he says after a moment's silence.

"Yes; quite alone. I have no one else in the world," and her voice breaks a little.

"I am sorry—inexpressibly sorry," he says with a ring of genuine sympathy. There is another interval of silence and then he goes on: "To-morrow I am due at St. Malo, where I stay for a month. If—if at any time I could be of any use to you perhaps—perhaps you would send me a wire and I would come at once, you know."

She smiled back at him gratefully. The large grey eyes are filled with tears.

"You are too kind" she answers in a low voice which trembles a little in spite of her effort to control herself, "but I could not think of troubling you. Thank you a thousand times."

The Honourable Charlie does not say anything more at the time, but he resorts to a pretty artifice that his hand may rest on hers for an instant and he feels an exquisite thrill at the touch.

They are not staying at the same hotel but after lunch he puts on his hat and strolls round to the viaduct from which the diligence starts in the hopes of having another glimpse of the girl before she goes. The sea has already receded, leaving the bare expanse of yellow ochre streaked here and there with a serpentine silver line of water, and miles away on the horizon a faint blue line marks the boundary of the *grèves*.

He is early. The diligence is already loaded with luggage, but the horses are not in, and the passengers have not made an appearance. He waits about a little, allaying the demand for English "tabac" which comes from the small bareheaded boys sitting with their legs dangling over the edge of the dyke. The road is reached from the gateway of the town by a little platform which runs round the curve of the buttress, and leads by a crazy flight of steps on to the sand. The Honourable Charlie saunters along the bridge, and presently the figure he is looking for emerges through the entrance, and to his delight he finds that she is alone.

She is romping with one of the huge mastiffs belonging to the fishermen, when he comes up, and he stands and watches her with ill veiled admiration in his glance.

"Well?" she says, stopping and pushing back the rebellious waves of hair that have fallen over her ears, "I suppose we shall have to start soon."

Digitized by Google

"I suppose so," he says; "I wish you were able to stop."

They walk together for a little time in silence, making their way towards the diligence.

"I have been thinking over—over what you told me," the Honourable Charlie goes on after a short pause. "Don't you think it would be wise to see a doctor?"

"A doctor!" with a little laugh; "what good could he do? We went to several specialists in Paris. They all say the same."

"But at least you might have a companion. If anything were to happen——"

"Yes, yes," she answers quickly, "I would have done so long ago, but mother will not hear of the extravagance. However, when we reach Coutances I shall suggest the matter again."

The Englishman glances at her with renewed respect.

"Well, you are a plucky little woman," he says frankly.

At this she blushes.

"Most people are courageous enough to face a necessity," she replies, with a smile.

He helps her to her seat on the roof of the diligence, assists her mother, who appears at this moment, to a corner place inside, and then climbs up beside his new divinity to have a last word with her.

Not until the horses are actually starting does he get down, and his last words are:

"Good-bye. And remember, if I can ever be of any use send me a wire; here is my address."

He jumps down, leaving his card in her hand, and stands in the middle of the road watching the rickety conveyance out of sight. Once or twice she turns and waves to him, and then he goes back to his hotel haunted with the memory of that sweet face and those large grey eyes, and secretly laughing at himself for being such a romantic fool.

About a fortnight later the Honourable Charlie Winter finds among his correspondence a letter in an unknown and unmistakably feminine hand. There is always a special interest in a communication from an unknown correspondent, but as he takes it up and examines the post-mark, an idea flashes across him, and he tears it open with a sudden accession of eagerness.

As he already anticipated, it is from the American, whose acquaintance he made at Mont St. Michel. It is brief, apologetic, almost tearful.

"The worst has happened," the letter runs simply, "and the doctor says that mother cannot possibly outlive the week. I thought I should be able to face my troubles alone, but now the time has come I am afraid. If you can come without any inconvenience to yourself you will earn the undying gratitude of yours sincerely, Harriet Tabor."

Of course, he goes. The idea of the poor girl being left alone in her sorrow maddens him, and he is selfish enough to be almost glad of the excuse to see her again.

About half-past six that evening he finds himself ensconced in a comfortable first-class carriage steaming into the little station of Coutances. From the window he can see the cathedral with its tall spires standing up against the gold and purple sky surrounded by its brood of white houses, with their slate roofs aflame with the reflection of the western glow.

He gets out, and takes a 'bus into the town. His one object is to get to his divinity as soon as possible. To his consternation he finds that he has still several miles to go. Something like a feeling of despair comes over him. A gendarme directs him to a little inn which, to judge from the number of vehicles standing in the courtyard, belongs to a fly proprietor.

The proprietor, in his blue blouse, is an idiot or only half awake. The Honourable Charlie feels that his temper is being sorely tried.

Finally a pretty, rosy-cheeked waiting girl appears, who speaks English with a rippling fluency.

"Oh, yes, they know the place. It is a resort for invalids, a spa some twelve miles away."

This is not comforting, for the Englishman is burning to reach his destination.

"Have they a horse that would do that distance?"

The proprietor takes his hands from his pockets and rubs his nose between his finger and thumb.

"To-night?" asks the rosy-cheeked girl.

"At once!" the Englishman replies impatiently.

A short consultation follows. Then the girl speaks again:

"To-morrow we will take you."

The Honourable Charlie offers a fabulous sum. The peasant rubs his nose again. Finally a horse is produced.

That drive seems as if it never would come to an end.

"I hope that I shall not be too late after all," he says to himself, taking out his cigarette case and drawing a long breath of the sweet country air and the odour of fresh cut hay. "Poor girl!"

The memory of her face haunts him. He thinks of her as he saw her first toiling up the steep steps of the abbey, her pretty cheeks flushed with exertion, her sailor's hat a little on one side and a bunch of red carnations in her belt.

"I must be in love with the girl," he thinks, "or I should not be so anxious about her. Love at first sight. Bah! What a fool I am."

* * * * *

When he reaches his destination he is shown at once to Miss Tabor's room.

"How good of you to come!" she says gratefully. Her voice trembles a little, and her eyes are red from weeping. One glance at her face and the Englishman knows what she cannot find courage to tell him—the mother is dead.

He does his utmost to comfort the girl. The loneliness of her position is horrible to contemplate.

"I must tell you," she says presently, as they sit together in the verandah, over which clematis, honeysuckle and vine intertwine and mingle with frail pink roses; "but it is sad—oh, so very sad!"

Her voice breaks a little, but she goes on:

"My mother committed suicide last night."

The Honourable Charlie's eyes are fixed on a fountain opposite. "Ah! Poor woman! In her state it was wrong that she should ever be allowed to travel alone."

He is inexpressibly shocked.

There is a moment's silence, and then quite unaccountably the girl laughs. It is a savage, exultant laugh, which makes the Englishman's blood run cold.

She catches his look, and her manner changes instantly.

"I beg your pardon," she says. "If you will forgive me I will go in and rest. I think I have gone through a little too much."

The Honourable Charlie remains on the verandah.

"Poor girl," he mutters. "Poor girl. I am sorry indeed for her."

His position is rather embarrassing.

The least he can do is to remain here until all the

Digitized by Google

funeral arrangements are complete; until the body of the unfortunate woman is interred.

After that his course is not so clear. The young lady herself will have to be consulted. Presumably she has a certain amount of money with her, and will return to America. Unless ——

The Honourable Charlie smiles thoughtfully. Then he throws back his head and laughs, for there does not seem any reason, after all, why he should not at least suggest the most reasonable way out of the difficulty.

True, he knows nothing of the girl except that she is remarkably pretty. Yet she is evidently clever and strong-minded, and endowed with pluck, the quality above all others that he admires in a woman. He gets up restlessly, and begins pacing up and down. The girl's face haunts him. Fate seems to have thrown them together.

"There is the hand of Providence in this," he says, coming to a sudden stand-still and pushing his hat back from his forehead. "Besides, marriage at the best of times is a lottery."

* * *

It is three weeks later. Outside one of the little hotels in Mont St. Michel a man and a woman are sitting.

"I am glad we chose this place for our honeymoon," the man is saying, as he raises his handsome eyes to the girl's face.

"Yes, indeed; it is here that the peasants always come for their wedding trip."

She leans back in her chair, fanning herself with her handkerchief.

"How hot it is!" she exclaims a moment later; "my throat feels parched!"

He fetches her a glass of ice water, and she drinks it down feverishly. She certainly does not look well.

Watching her narrowly he is startled by the look in her face. While his eyes are resting on her she rises to her feet.

"It is breathless here," she exclaims; "let us go on the ramparts. Come! Come quickly!"

She starts off without waiting for him, and frightened at her manner he hurries after her up the narrow steps which lead to the walls.

"Darling, you are ill!"

She answers him with a laugh; the same savage exultant laugh that had made his blood run cold before.

Then she leans back against the wall, panting. He goes up to her but she pushes him back with a force that surprises him.

"Listen, listen," she cries, "I have made a fool of you. Ha! ha! You thought it was my mother who was mad. You believed what I told you. But it was not. It was me! me! me! You fool! Twice I have been in an asylum. Ha! ha! ha! They let me out. They thought I was cured. My mother took me away. Travel, the doctors said, would do me good. We came over here, and she never guessed that she was travelling with a maniac. Ha! ha! It was grand. Do you see? It was grand. She did not know. Only at times it came over me. I felt it coming like I feel it now. I used to go away by myself and fight it out with the fiends that possessed me. But how can I here? I am shut in by the sea and the quicksands. They shan't get me. No! no! I am caught. When it was over I used to go back. No one should ever know. How frightened they would be if they thought I was mad. Ha! ha! You are frightened now. Why is everyone frightened of a poor, mad girl? My mother began to suspect. She sent for a doctor. They were going to take me back to the cells. I thought of a plan. I sent for you. My mother began to watch me. She was tired of me; she hated me; she wanted to shut me up. And then, oh, that terrible night! Every moment I feared the doctor would arrive. My mother was watching me like a cat watches a mouse. But I was stronger than she. Ha! ha! They should not lock me up. I would be free, free, free! It was better that she should be killed. Do you see how cunning I was?"

She pushes him back with a force that surprises him.

The poor girl stops as if for want of breath. The Englishman stands transfixed with horror. She comes towards him, and he shrinks back terrified. He tries to call out, but his lips are parched, and no sound comes. Her eyes are bloodshot, her face livid. She creeps nearer. He begins to run. His legs are trembling; his head seems on fire. He feels her hot breath on his neck. Suddenly her footsteps cease. He turns round. She has sprung on to the parapet, and the next instant, with a wild maniacal laugh she hurls herself over on to the rocks below.

Alder Carr.

Digitized by Google

Kitty Colahan's Loss.

THE narrow alley was filled from curb to curb with snow. The steps of a small house showed their edges from under untrodden mounds of white. No one had gone either in or out since the storm's coming. The cold was frightfully intense.

Against one of the panes of the only window a little nose was tightly pressed. The round spot it made was glaringly white. Below it was a grey spray of condensed breath; above it a pair of wondering brown eyes stared fixedly across the way to another little house which had all its blinds down.

A baby voice said: "Mamma, tum, look! Titty Tolagin's pulled down all her blinds!"

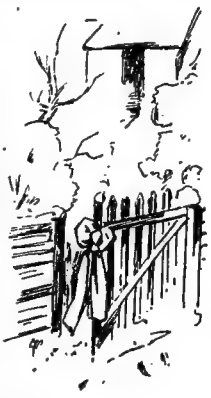
A young woman, poorly, but neatly clad, bonneted and wrapped to face the whirling snow, responded: "Yes, Mamie. It is to tell people that poor Kitty has lost her baby."

"Did she d'op it in the alley?"

"No, dear. It has gone away for ever. Kitty's crying about it."

"Tant the baby come ever back to Titty?"

The mother smiled at the child's misunderstanding. "No, dear," she explained. "'For ever' means that the baby's gone for always. Kitty will never get it back. Be a good little girl while mamma goes to buy something for dinner. Don't go near the fire."



The mother kissed her and went out. The little one turned and stuck the white spot on the pane again. The breath-mist spread, and the brown eyes were fixed sorrowfully on the gap in the gateway.

Soon a sudden impulse seized her. She slid down backwards from the chair holding her up to the outlook. There was a glimpse of chubby red legs above her short stockings as her feet touched the floor. She ran to the corner behind the door, her play world, and from beneath a fragment of old shawl doing duty as bed and cover, she tenderly raised a rag doll, cuddled it in her arms, kissed its flat face, and, with a great sob, whispered: "Dood-bye!"

She wrapped the shawl warmly about it and went to the door. Its latch was almost beyond her reach. From toe-tip to finger point she stretched her utmost; the latch loosened, the door blew open, and she sank down on her heels with a sigh of relief. Then she stepped out into the street.

The snow-flakes rushed at her, but she set her determined face against them. The wind straightened back her curls and plastered her unbelted frock to the soft lines of her figure; but she threw herself against it with a brave thrust, then edged down the steps to the pavement. The snow reached to her knees. Nevertheless, with her eyes fixed upon the gate, she waded forward.

The curb was lined with snow. She stepped over it, and fell sprawling. For an instant she was lost in feathery depths, then a powdered head popped up, spitting and spluttering, but pressed tightly to it was the dirty face of a rag baby. "Never 'ou mind," she said to it firmly, "we'll det there. Keep oor mouth shut, den de snow tant det in. Oo tant spit like I tan."

Onward she plunged, clasping her precious all, floundering, flushed, breathing hard, her face set with purpose and resolve. At last she reached the open gateway, passed through it, and hit the closed door of Kitty Colahan's house a vigorous thump with her tiny fist.

The door opened. A grief-worn, overworked woman, shabby even in the best she had, was startled from her set look of weariness at seeing but half a mite of a child sticking out of the snow at her doorstep.

"Good gracious, what is this!" she exclaimed, in alarm.

The little one was quick to speak. Looking up, her brown eyes full of sympathy, holding the muffled baby aloft as far as her chubby arms would reach, she said:

"I've b'inged you *my* baby, Titty. Don't ty any more, p'ease."

MARY BRYAN.

Digitized by Google

A RUINED LIFE.

STARTING in life with equal chances, having each a modest competence, it might not unreasonably have been expected that Claude and Gerald Willis would, as their father had done before them, in course of time become prominent citizens in the thriving town of Oxminster in which their predecessors had for generations been respected and looked up to.

They were admittedly well-behaved, quiet-spoken young fellows, and when, at their mother's death, it became necessary for them to go out into the world, a vacancy was at once found for the elder, Claude, in an old-fashioned solicitor's office, whilst the younger was offered and accepted a berth under the corporation.

Both acquitted themselves well from the first, the elder in course of time being taken into partnership by his employer, and the younger, by dint of perseverance, working his way up whilst quite a young man to a responsible position under the Town Council, to which his brother was in due time appointed legal adviser.

The two lads had from the date of their mother's death shared a home together, enjoying a common purse between them, and whilst the younger was economical in his tastes and pursuits, the elder proved himself more or less of a spendthrift, and having speedily run through his own share of their joint inheritance did not scruple to avail himself of his brother's liberality.

The latter was the soul of generosity, and so long as he had enough for his modest requirements was quite willing that Claude should appropriate the remainder, without even so much as expressing gratitude for the same. The elder boy had, during his parent's lifetime, always been the favourite, and it seemed to come quite natural to him to usurp the lion's share of everything. Although by no means so robust as Gerald, he was decidedly the better looking of the two, and had that happy knack of making himself agreeable to everyone he came in contact with, whereas Gerald was by nature shy and reserved.

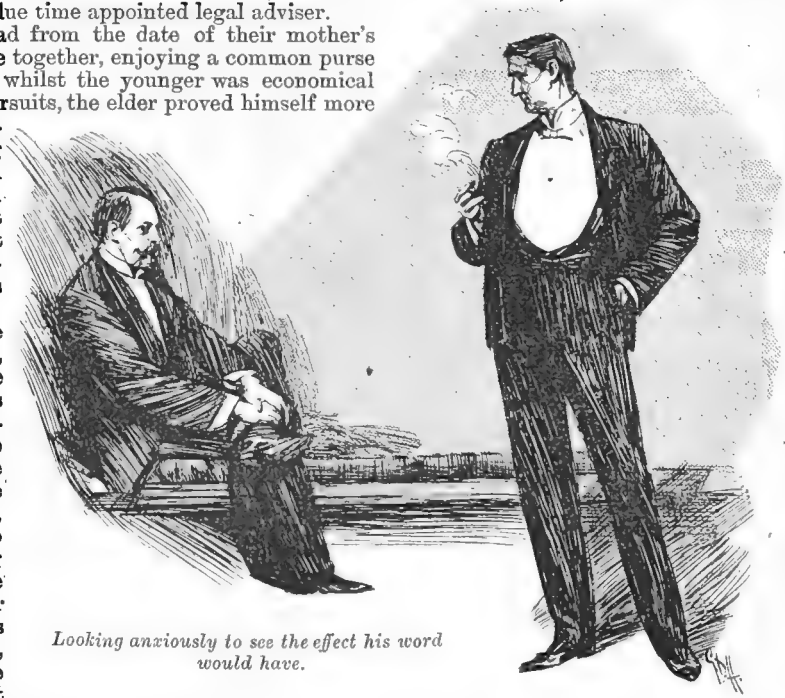
To the mother who had idolised her first born, he was little short of perfection, and her dying injunction to the younger son had been to watch over and protect his elder brother, a duty which out of reverence and affection for her memory he had, to his credit, ever kept before him.

So long as it was merely a question of money between them nothing had ever arisen to mar their brotherly relationship; but the time came, as come it will in the lives of most young men, when a woman came into their lives.

A woman, young and lovely, the personification of all that was good, pure, and beautiful—at least, so she appeared to Gerald; a beautiful toy, a thing to be possessed of and proud to own relationship with, was the light in which she was viewed by Claude.

Thrown constantly in her society, both men unconsciously fell in love with her, each in his own way. The elder man probably never for a moment suspected that for the woman he had set his heart upon making his wife his staid and reserved brother had anything more than the ordinary feeling of friendship.

But the latter, shy and self-abasing, as had ever been his *rôle* in life, was well aware of the turn events were taking, and was often sorely tempted to learn his fate from her own lips. Nevertheless, the promise extracted from him by his mother on her death-bed: "Promise me, my boy, whatever may happen, you will never thwart your brother's interests in life, for, remember, he has not the advantages of a resolute will and the indomitable self-control that you have," restrained him.



Looking anxiously to see the effect his word would have.

So he allowed matters to drift on in a way that, as everybody could see, could have but one ending. And she?—deep down in her heart there was a feeling of true admiration and genuine respect for the self devotion of the younger man to the elder, a feeling that might have been happily kindled into love, had he but dared to woo her aright, but his abstention in due course brought about what everybody in Oxminster had long foreseen, and the only person who was surprised probably, when the announcement was made to him one evening, was Gerald himself.

"I have done it at last old fellow."

"Done what?" inquired his brother.

Digitized by Google

"Asked Lucy to be my wife, and she has consented. I thought she would," he went on, in an aggravatingly confident tone; "but it's a weight off my mind to have it settled. Won't you congratulate me, Gerald? Who knows, it may be your turn some day."

"I—I hope you may be happy, Claude; but you need not bother about me, I shall never marry,—I'm not a marrying man, I think."

His brother was too elated with his newly-found happiness to take much notice of what was said to him; but had he noticed the set, stern look on the younger man's face, he might not have answered so jocularly as he did.

"Well, it takes less to keep one than two, any way; and do you know, I am awfully hard up just now, could you manage to lend me a few hundreds? Just till I get straight again, you know."

"I have not very much capital left, I am sorry to say, but I can raise a little. How much do you want?"

"Well, could you manage two or three hundred pounds, do you think?" looking anxiously to see the effect his words would have.

"How long do you want it for?" was the quiet rejoinder.

"Oh," airily, "only for a few months. I have been speculating rather heavily lately, but it is bound to come all right."

"You can have £300 in two days, but I must tell you it will exhaust all I have in the world, and if that goes I cannot do any more for you. I can manage easily enough to live on my salary."

"I'm awfully obliged to you. By the way, Lucy's father asked me to dine there to-morrow night and to bring you, too. Will you come?"

"No, thanks. I am engaged then; but please convey my congratulations to Miss Grayson."

"Queer chap, my brother," said the elder man, to himself, as he went to his room; "but he's a good fellow, and that £300 will just put me on my feet."

In due course the marriage between the rising young lawyer, Claude Willis, and old Dr. Grayson's daughter was consummated in the old parish church, and, to the surprise of everybody, the best man was not the bridegroom's brother, but a friend of the latter's, a member of the London Stock Exchange, who had come down expressly for the occasion.

Time went on, not a word had been said by Claude as to the repayment of the £300, and Gerald had never once alluded to it.

The treasurership to the Town Council falling vacant, Gerald was approached with a view to its acceptance, but he was very comfortable in the position he held, he said, and on the principle of to those that have shall be given, the post was offered to, and willingly accepted by, his elder brother, who thus combined in himself the position of solicitor and treasurer to the borough.

The two men were, in consequence of their duties, much thrown together, and one day the elder remarked: "Oh, by the way, about that £300 you lent me."

"I am in no immediate want of it, Claude, unless it is quite convenient."

"Well, I'm glad of that, for the fact is I'm in a bit of a mess."

"I'm sorry to say, I can't assist you—just at present."

"Is that really so?"

"It is indeed; although I have been living, as you know, very quietly, my expenses have been heavy of late; and although I should never think of worrying you, I meant to have asked if you could repay me, say £50, this month."

"Impossible—I am sorry to say—and——"

"Is it really as bad as that, Claude?"

"It is indeed; and if I can't raise £500, temporarily you understand, merely for a week or two, a month at the outside, I 'm a ruined man. It is not that I care for myself, so much, it's Lucy—it would kill her I'm afraid."

* * * * *

"You are quite sure of what you say?"

"Sure! Sure as I stand here, it *must* come all right; it is only a matter of time, my stockbroker has told me so."

"Very well, then."

"I don't know how to thank you enough. I know I am doing wrong, but for her sake," he muttered under his voice.

People had noticed that the usually affable, easy-going Mr. Willis, sen., had been inclined to be testy of late; now, however, he was quite himself again, and it was Mr. Gerald who seemed more reserved than ever.

* * * * * *

"Have you heard the news?" said one Oxminsterian to another.

"No; what is it?"

"Gerald Willis has bolted."

"No!"

"Fact, I assure you; and they do say his accounts are all wrong."

"By Jove! I'm sorry for Claude."

"Yes, and his wife too."

"I should never have thought it of Gerald."

"No more should I. But you can never tell; these quiet ones are often the worst."

"That's so. It will be rough on Claude."

"Yes. I saw him just now; he is nearly beside himself at the scandal."

"Poor chap!"

The report of the London auditor, who was summoned to go through the town accounts, was that there was a deficiency of exactly £500, and so skilfully had the fraud been committed that it was impossible, in his opinion, for the treasurer to have discovered it until the annual audit.

Oxminster gave vent to a sigh of relief. It was bad enough for one brother to have committed himself; it would have been too much to bear had a charge of culpable negligence been brought home to the other.

* * * * * *

Months went by; the incident had been practically forgotten, when the astounding intelligence had become noised about that the absconding servant of the council, Gerald Willis, had voluntarily surrendered himself to the authorities in London, and would be charged before the Oxminster magistrates on the following day.

The prisoner having made a full confession, it was only necessary to call formal evidence, and the case before the Bench only occupied a few minutes, the prisoner being committed for trial. Out of consideration to the family, the brother was not called upon to give evidence, but he was the recipient of hearty congratulations on having been honourably exonerated from all blame in connection with the deplorable transaction.

S. J. F. Newbery.

Digitized by Google

A Man with a Noble Heart.

HE was drunk. There was no mistaking it. He was also ugly. There was no room for a doubt of that either. Physically, mentally, and morally, he was ugly. The hilarious patrons of the Gum Tree Saloon in the little Australian up-country township had for some hours been watching his increasing opulence of alcoholism and combativeness with that interest which always marked them when prospects of a fight be came prominent.

The movements of the stranger upon the night of which I write were therefore viewed with something more than common interest. One by one the miners had dropped into the Gum Tree Saloon during the evening, until the tables were all well surrounded, and the bar was filled with watchful observers.

"Who's the new chum?" inquired Tom Cathcart, in careless way, as he dealt three cards to Gashwilder.

"Dunno," briefly responded the big digger, throwing his hand down in a disgusted way; "he's on'y just arriv', and it's my opinion as how, if he keeps on, he'll reach the end of his claim extremely quick."

"Hello," ejaculated Mr. Cathcart a moment later, "the ball has begun."

Everybody in the room had risen to his feet. The tall, red-shirted digger, a man of angular frame and sinister visage, had at last succeeded in drawing somebody into a controversy. The diggers of "Squatter" Gulch were about to be entertained.

"Humph!" muttered Mr. Cathcart, "it's a shame for him to pick a row with Glanders. The poor chap can scarcely hold his head up, let alone fighting. I've a mighty good notion to sail in myself."

"Hold on," cautioned Gashwilder, with his index finger laid knowingly along his nose. "Thomas Glanders is all right; he is slow but sure. Look there!"

The quarrel at the bar had been growing louder. The new comer, inflamed with the fiery liquor he had been drinking, had selected one of the least offensive men in the settlement as the special object of his displeasure. This person, a Mr. Thomas Glanders, was a quiet, respectably-dressed man, with a solid face and a dejected manner, who was looked upon in a friendly, often a pitying, light by his companions. There had been something sad in his life—that was known to the entire population of the Gulch. What it was no one precisely knew, and no one cared. But nearly everybody took an interest in him, and not a soul lived on the diggings who would not have fought for his sake at any time.

The stranger was heaping abuse on Glanders' head—abuse which he could not comprehend, and which seemed to half bewilder him. But the offensive digger went on, goaded to increased fury by his own words. Still Glanders stood helplessly gazing about him, making no reply, but occasionally passing the back of his rough, brown hand across his forehead. Finally, in a transport of rage, the stranger drew a revolver. Then Glanders seemed to awaken. He spoke for the first time.

"Put it up," he said quietly, "or I will kill you."

The stranger laughed, and the crowd, angry and menacing, began to close in upon him. Glanders motioned them back.

"Put it up," he repeated firmly, "or I will shoot you like a coon."

The stranger fired, and a part of Glanders' hat fell to the floor. Few of the citizens of the Gulch had known or would have believed he could act with such decision. He had hitherto been thought by them to be a slow and easy-going person, too inoffensive to be trodden upon, and too gentle to respond with violence. But upon this occasion he belied his reputation. Quick as lightning—so quickly that only one or two in the room saw the movement—a Colt sprang from his pocket, a deep report sounded through the room, and the stranger fell to the floor.

There was silence for a moment. Then the wounded bully, after writhing a moment where he lay, beckoned Glanders towards him. He was no longer violent. He motioned Glanders to lean closer. There was nothing but pain in his red face now, and great beads of perspiration stood out upon his forehead. He whispered a few words brokenly, and then suddenly fell back, dead. Glanders lowered the man's head to the floor, and then slowly rose to his feet. The hush, which had some time ago fallen upon the crowd, was not yet disturbed.

"Boys," said Glanders, in a voice which trembled slightly, "I hated to do it, but it couldn't be helped. I'm sorry it was so, and I'm willin' to abide by what you say. If it was murder, hand me over to the p'lice, and be quick about it."

A murmur that arose almost to a shout ran through the room. Every man there endorsed his course. Glanders began to move slowly towards the door. He paused once, drew his hat down over his eyes, buttoned his coat tightly about his throat, and thrust his hands into his pockets with an air that indicated a purpose.

"Poor things!" he muttered, as he strode into the night. "They're orphans now, and I made 'em so!"

* * * * *

On a piece of ground some paces from the beaten track, close to the trunk of a tall gum tree, some distance from the settlement of Squatters' Gulch, was pitched a rude hut. Near by, dimly seen through the darkness, were three lean, unhappy-looking horses, browsing in a helpless way upon the scant herbage which the place afforded. At the foot of the tree a heap of smouldering embers showed that there had been a small fire earlier in the night.

This was the scene into which Glanders peered half

Digitized by Google

an hour after the tragic occurrence I have just described.

He went slowly over and threw a few sticks on the fire. In a little while there was a blaze, which, after spluttering a moment, gave out considerable light. This illumination, or the sound of Glanders' footsteps about the place, apparently aroused some degree of life inside the tent, for the flap was raised, and two very big blue eyes peered cautiously through the aperture thus formed. It was entirely without his knowledge that the owner of those curious eyes stole out of the tent and crept slyly towards him. Not until she spoke was he aware of her presence.

"Where's the old man?" were the first words Glanders heard.

They startled him slightly and he looked earnestly into the young face that was upturned to his. Perhaps it was the flickering of the firelight that caused the quick shade that fell across his face. But it looked like an expression of pain. The girl, annoyed at his silence, went on impetuously:

"Don't you hear? What's the matter with you? Where's the old man?"

"Down the Gulch," replied Glanders, slowly and with some difficulty.

"Oh," said the girl, with an odd mixture of sarcasm and curiosity. "He sent you to say he was drunk, I s'pose. Said he wouldn't be home till he got sober, didn't he? Told you to tell us to look sharp, or he'd lick both of us when he got home—hey?"

"Does he beat you, then?" asked Glanders, with a weak attempt at evasion.

"Does he? I should think he does. And I've got my opinion of a big loafer that licks a little gal like me, what can't help herself."

She was a slender child, perhaps twelve years old. Her hair was curly and light, and it fell in a tangled mass over her forehead and neck. She was poorly clad, and her brown feet had long been strangers to the cramping influence of shoes. There was a touch of great pity in Mr. Glanders' eyes as he looked at this child, standing there in the firelight, and regarding him fixedly.

"Tell me," he said, "do you like the old man? Are you fond of him?"

"Well," responded the girl after a pause, "I can't say as I love him. He's too handy with the back of his fist to make me cling to him."

Glanders sighed, as though he felt relieved from some anxiety.

"But then," the girl went on, with childish frankness, "you can't hate a man when he's the only purtector you've got. Ugly as he was, he put all the bread into my mouth as ever went there, and I've got to remember that. Sometimes there wasn't much of it, and sometimes it was mighty queer bread. But as a gen'ral thing, he did the best he knowed how."

Glanders was just at that moment thinking he was about the darkest criminal in the world. To save himself from possible destruction, he had killed a fellow-being—an act, I regret to say, which was not sufficiently infrequent in those days to call for any special regrets upon its own account. But Glanders reflected that in depriving the bully of his life, he had also taken away the only prop upon which this helpless child leant for support. It was a reflection which filled him at first with dismay and self-reproach, and then with a certain definiteness of purpose.

"Little girl," said he, after a moment, passing his hand over her straying curls with a kind of rough tenderness that was not without its element of magnetism. "Little girl, if there was a man—mind ye, I don't say thare *is* a man—but if there *was* one as come to you and says, says this man, if so be as you two children wants a home, bein' without one, ye can come and live along of me, and though it ain't a refined abode, bein' built as it were in the first rude stages o' civilisation—if any man was to say this to ye, and your dad didn't particularly mind, what would you answer?"

The girl looked full into his face.

"Answer? Why I'd take the offer like lightning—only," she hesitated an instant—"only the old man never'd stand by and let me have such a good thing as that—never."

"He'll never bother ye any more, my child," said Glanders. "Do ye feel very bad about it?"

"Bad?" she echoed.

"Yes. The old man has been took, as it were, to put it gently, to Abraham's bosom. He was killed, my child, and the man what offers to take ye into his home is the one as did it."

The young girl started back, and regarded Glanders with a strange expression. It was not a look of repulsion, or anger, or fright, but rather a look of astonishment. Presently, after peering into his eyes for some little time, she said:

"Then I don't believe it was your fault. You ain't the kind of a man to do that sort of thing 'thout a cause. And as for me, it's a-stonishin' he hasn't ketched it afore."

Glanders took a deep breath, which sounded like a sigh of relief.

"Then," said he, "we must be movin'."

In the morning the camp of Squatters' Gulch was surprised to see three horses standing by the door of Glanders' shanty, and, later in the day, it was still further astonished to observe two children, a boy and a girl, playing about the place. Who they were, and where they came from, was a deep and absorbing mystery. That their advent was connected with the death of the stranger was not a theory which occurred to many of the diggers.

Meanwhile, in the shanty itself, there were some odd developments. The new residents had quietly domesticated themselves with that affluent confidence which is the distinguishing trait of that migratory childhood, which, being cast this way and that by the changes which constantly occur in new countries, readily accustoms itself to fresh surroundings. One night Glanders said to the girl:

"I don't want to pry into no family secrets of yourn, becos it ain't none of my business perticklerly, but, at the same time, it ain't reasonable fer me to go on always a-callin' of ye, 'Little girl,' and the young chap, 'Bob.'"

"That's so," promptly replied the young girl. "My name's Lucy Bryton. And his," pointing to the boy, "his is Robert. His t'other name ain't like mine, 'cause he's only a 'dopted brother. *His* name is Rathbun—Robert Rathbun. Hello! What's up, Mr. Tom?"

"Nothin'," replied Glanders, whose face had suddenly become rigid. "On'y I dropped my pipe, that's all. Go to bed, youngsters. I want to think. Wait a bit. What became of yer mother—Bob?"

"Dead, sir. Drownded in the overflow. I haven't seen her since I was a baby."

When they were gone, and for hours afterwards, Glanders sat looking gloomily into the fire.

"Pore gal," he muttered, after a long time. "If

Digitized by Google

matters had come out a *leetle* different that would hev bin my boy. Mine. Well, what's to hinder now?"

Having by some acute mental process convinced himself that nothing was to hinder, Glanders went thoughtfully to bed.

* * * * *

The soft autumn days glided by, the clear and genial Queensland summer melted slowly away into the crisp and vestal winter; then came the budding spring, the lazy summer, and the blushing autumn again. So the weeks glided into months, and the months closed into years, until Squatters' Gulch had developed into quite a township.

In a tasteful cottage, far towards the outer edge of the town, lived Mr. Thomas Glanders and the members of his family, who have hitherto been described. It was a pretty place, and it was marked here and there by the unmistakable traces of a woman's presence. Neat white curtains hung in the windows, a hammock swung on the verandah, and a trailing vine grew up over the posts by the door.

One night, as the sun was climbing down across the western sky, the verandah was occupied by two young people. A strong, hearty young man was swinging in the hammock, while standing beside him, idly moving the network backwards and forwards, was a lithe and graceful girl. She was blushing deeply, but not hanging her head. There was, indeed, in her large blue eyes a look of open frankness which I do not think is often found about the faces of young women when they are discussing the subject which was at that moment occupying her attention.

"There is something which seems almost like sacrilege about it, Robert," she said, with a touch of remonstrance in her voice. "I had grown to think you my brother in reality, as well as by association."

"But you love me, Lucy. You have told me so." His voice was deep, and not unmusical to the ear. And it had about it, in the time of pleading, a persuasive tenderness which, I fear, more than one of the fluttering damsels of the Gulch had found it difficult to resist. But Lucy was not of the common sort, and she did not heedlessly assent to the proposition advanced.

"What," she asked presently, "would *he* think?"

It was apparent that the young man did not require a more definite descriptive term to understand who was referred to.

"He would scarcely object, Lucy. You know he loves both of us dearly, and his greatest happiness would be in making us happy."

"True," replied Lucy thoughtfully. "But if—if he would rather we did not seek this kind of happiness, Robert—you know we owe him a very great deal. Our home, our playthings, our pets, our rescue from an existence that would have left us both more to be pitied than if we were dead, our education—all were given us by him. We can scarcely do anything that may bring him pain, Robert."

The young man in the hammock was silent for a moment.

"Tell me," he said, in a little while, "why you suppose there is any chance that he will object?"

Lucy's face assumed a deeper scarlet. "I—I—well, nothing. It is probably my imagination."

A lithe and graceful girl.

"Will you ask him?"

Another pause. Then, in a low voice: "Yes, I will ask him tonight, if he does not speak first. If he consents, Robert, I will do all that you have asked."

"That's a dear, sweet, girl," exclaimed Robert, springing to his feet and kissing her lips. "We shall be very happy."

As he strolled down the hill, Lucy's eyes followed his retreating figure sadly. When he was gone she drew a long and slightly tremulous breath, and laid her head against the post. She still sat thus, with her eyes bent upon the ground, when a heavy footfall aroused her attention.

"Good evenin', Lucy," Glanders said kindly, as he drew a chair up to her side, and seated himself so that the folds of her dress brushed against his knees. "I met Robert as I came up the hill. A fine boy that, Lucy. I'm as proud of him as if I had been his father."

A moment of silence, during which Miss Lucy breathed a trifle quickly. One hand lay unemployed in her lap. Glanders picked it up, and held it in his own. It looked so small, so white, so lovely in his great palm, that he speedily covered it up by drawing his brown fingers about it.

"It's a whiter hand," he began, slowly and reflectively, "though it ain't much bigger than it was when I first took it into mine, that night under the big tree. Lucy, you are more to me than I can tell you—more than I know. There is but one happiness for me, but one rest, after my life's struggle; and it has been a struggle, Lucy, that ain't always been easy for to get the best of. But, Lucy, I don't want to find fault nor to complain, if it has brought me you. Eh? Why, child, you are cryin'. Deary, if I've said anything that's grieved ye, don't mind me. Lucy, I'll never speak of it again as long as I live."

Mr. Glanders was down by her side, holding her hands and trying to soothe her. In a moment she became quite calm.

"You have been kind to me," she said, after a little while. "I was only a stranger's child—a stranger who would have taken your life. You took me in and cared

Google

for me, and worked and toiled for me, so that I might have comforts and be happy. You took me, a ragged, rough, ill-bred child, and you gave me the chance to become a lady. You have earned my—my love, and——"

"Don't speak that way, Lucy. I didn't want to *buy* your heart. I didn't Lucy, and I wouldn't take it like that."

"You didn't buy it, you—you won it! Tom, I love you very, very dearly. It may not be the kind of love you expect just yet, but by-and-bye, when we have grown used to each other, when we have forgotten that we were——"

"Father and daughter, almost!" he broke in. "Are you sure, Lucy? Will you never regret this?"

"Never!" she cried impulsively. "But let it be quick. Do not wait a day, but have it done at once! It—it must be without delay, or—or——"

She did not finish the sentence, but with a sharp, convulsive kiss upon his brown cheek—a kiss which sounded almost like a gasp—she was gone. In the gloaming, upon his porch, sat Mr. Thomas Glanders, a very happy man. Behind him lay all the gloom and sorrow and pain that could never come to him now. In the future—what? He could not answer, though it seemed very bright.

* * * * * *

Robert did not come home during the night preceding the wedding—a habit which, I am obliged to confess, is not uncommon among the compatriots of his years. Mr. Glanders had wished to defer the quiet ceremony until his arrival, but Lucy had refused with a feverish haste, which her companion set down to the score of diffidence, It was some hours after the marriage that Mr. Glanders, failing to stir up any enthusiasm in Lucy's breast regarding the various topics of conversation, kissed her tenderly, and strolled out for a walk among the trees.

"She's better alone for a time," he muttered apologetically to himself. "When I come back in half an hour she'll be as bright and cheery as ever."

For some time after he went away Lucy sat looking blankly at the wall. Then she arose and walked out into the porch, and stood looking down the hill where she had last seen Robert pass away. In a few moments she became conscious that someone was near her. It was Robert, white as a ghost, and trembling nervously. She looked into his face, but could not speak. There was a deep pathetic inquiry in her eyes which spoke more plainly than words.

"Yes, I know," he said, in a strained and worried fashion. "I heard it as I came up. I shall not reproach you, Lucy, for if he asked you to marry him it was the only return you could make for all his more than fatherly kindness."

There was a footstep not far away, but it was not noted by the two young people.

"I have come, Lucy," continued Robert, in the same hurried and unnatural fashion, "to say good-bye."

"Robert!" she gasped, "do not, *do not* go away."

"I must," he said, in a strange tone, regaining a part of his own force as he saw a touch of weakness in the woman he loved. "There is no other course. It would break my heart to stay here and see you the wife of another. It would wear out my honour, my gratitude, my manhood. Day by day all that is good about me would fade and fade away, until I died of shame and mental agony, or became a reproach to all the world. It must be, Lucy. We love each other too dearly to have it otherwise."

Our pets.

She was silent.

"Good-bye, Lucy," he said, more quietly, taking her hand.

"Good-bye," she whispered, in a choking voice.

For a moment he held her hand in his. At the same instant a shadow that had been thrown by the sun across the ground almost at their feet, began slowly and stealthily to steal away.

"Try," said Robert, struggling hard to regain his composure, "try to forget me. You can only find happiness in that oblivion. Or, if you think of me sometimes, remember me only as the brother who grew up with you and loved you—with only a—a brother's love. Good-bye. God bless you, little sister."

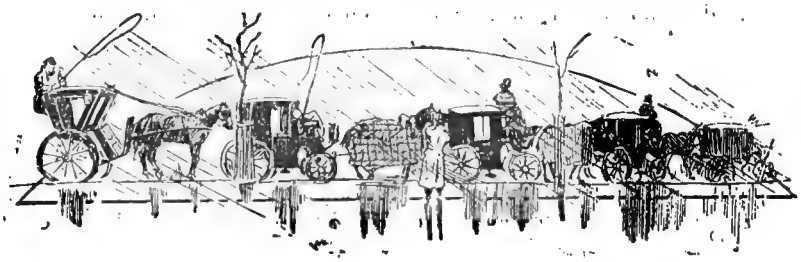
He turned on his heel and took a step forward. The sharp report of a revolver from the rear of the house arrested his attention.

"What was that?" asked Lucy, turning if possible a shade whiter.

In a moment they were both under the great gum tree which stood a few paces up the side of the hill. What they saw at that moment will never be forgotten by either of them.

Stretched upon the soft carpet of grass, with a look of ineffable gentleness in his fast glazing eyes, a smile on his lips, and her portrait on his heart, lay the rigid figure of the husband of the stranger's child.

LEANDER RICHARDSON.



Digitized by Google

A Ballad Madman

I am, the world knows, a kind, extremely sensitive, and honest man. The misfortunes of others, and all human sorrows, awaken my compassionate sympathy, and cause my tears to flow. No mendicant has ever passed me without receiving substantial aid.

I have bestowed marriage portions upon orphan girls, established deserving young men in business, founded hospitals, and provided for the aged.

I have taught self-denial to the rich, virtue to the fallen; and once, when attacked by ruffians with murderous intent, I persuaded them from their evil designs, and led them to repentance and reformation. Wherever I have encountered suffering it has been my purpose to mitigate and relieve it, carrying resignation to the dying, hope to the despairing, and changing into cries of joy the wild lamentations of the unfortunate.

Can I be, then, an unconscionable brute, controlled by blind instinct, a victim of inherent depravity, a madman attracted by blood as by the lips of woman, and one who flies to murder as to love? No; a thousand times no! Have I not already said that I am good and tender-hearted? I believe in God; in a God who rewards and in a God who punishes, in a God who sheds upon us the sweetness of His everlasting love, in a God who kindles the flames of expiating torment against those who trangress His laws.

Why—why, then, did I commit that terrible crime? Why did I slay, with the refinement of calm ferocity—yes, why did I kill a loving and beloved being? For I did, indeed, love her, sweet victim! Yet killed her; basely murdered her as she lay sleeping at my side; while in her happy dreams, perhaps, my image appeared to her, and she smiled tenderly upon it.

I loved Margot. She seemed a child, though almost eighteen years of age. I met her upon the highway, one evening, clothed in rags and almost dying of hunger and of want. She was pretty, slight, and delicate, very pale, with large eyes hollowed by suffering. She was an orphan, in whom no one took any interest; gentle and weak, she had been cruelly abused by wicked people, so she fled far from her tormentors, stopping at night in villages or at farms, asking for food, alms, and sometimes during the day picking up along the road the decaying fruit fallen from the trees.

I was deeply affected, and wept with her. What would become of her, thus alone in the world? Vice and crime run rampant in the country, lurk on the hill-side, crouch in the shadows of the trees, and death is everywhere. Suddenly a sinister flock of ravens wheeled ominously in the cold grey sky above our heads, causing me to shudder with fear, and I thought perhaps the good Lord had sent her there for me to love and protect. I took her with me. Being rich, I could afford the luxury of a benevolent action. The next day I married Margot. In that part of the country where I resided I was considered somewhat queer and eccentric, but this marriage was regarded as an act of pure lunacy, and thereafter my reputation as a maniac was definitely established. Upon seeing me pass, people frequently exclaimed: "That man is crazy." Alas! was it true?

At all events, I was happy. Margot displayed so much tenderness for me—she was the most affectionate, the most devoted, the most submissive of wives. Fearing me as a master, she worshipped me as a god. I attempted to educate her in accordance with her new condition, for, as she had always lived with rustics, she had, of course, their manners. But, though her heart was good and her mind pure, night, black night reigned in her brain. She could not learn the simplest things, despite her prodigious efforts and her ardent desire to obey and please me.

Poor little creature, she understood only one thing, and that was to love me, and she endeavoured, by every means in her power, to give some proof of it by her blind submission and dog-like devotion. Then, too, she sang—sang eating, sang dressing, all day long. What she sang—ah! fatal and accursed song—was an old ballad, tender and pathetic, such as the blind chant in the streets. Her voice then took a mournful and monotonous intonation, swelling the words, dwelling on the syllables. That irritated me beyond everything. Margot's song was destroying my life. It haunted my reading, my reveries, my prayers. It was stamped upon my brain, and filled it with its stupid refrain. I could no longer read, no longer write, no longer think. I attempted to flee from its harassing presence. Whole

Digitized by Google

days I traversed the fields, the forest, followed the river's course, humming to silence the abominable strains which pursued me. But neither field, nor forest, nor my voice itself could deliver me from the accursed air.

Poor little Margot! She knew nothing of all this torture. I had not told her, lest it should give her pain. And she continued to sing, thinking her voice still sweet to me. However, my patience was at last exhausted, and I requested her to be silent. She was astonished. She wept long and bitterly, and promised to sing no more. But the old habit was strong with her, the song had become such a part of her nature that frequently she would forget herself, and break out into singing.

At these times I would regard her sternly, and she would cease. Her voice was silent, but I perceived by the motion of her lips that she was continuing mentally, in spite of herself, as if impelled by some invisible power, the air begun aloud. At last she sang no more. But her lips were always moving. What had before troubled my ears, disturbed now my eyes. And this fearful thing happened: I no longer heard the song, but I saw it, saw it distinctly, plainly, remorselessly. As formerly, all objects sang with Margot's voice, now all things discovered its terrifying phantom.

Six years—ages—six years of this fiendish torment passed away. My health failed visibly, and I feared my reason was giving way. I no longer took pleasure in anything, all things were alike insupportable to me. My studies were abandoned. I became gloomy, and as restless as an imprisoned wild beast, and often had paroxysms of passionate anger or strange hallucinations. Death seemed imminent, and it was a great consolation to think that I should soon be delivered from the incubus which was destroying my life.

One night Margot was sleeping peacefully by my side. How pretty she looked—her small face so delicate and sad, her rosy mouth half opened, her breath coming lightly and regularly, her bare arm folded under her head. I looked at her and gently caressed her long, unbound black hair streaming over the pillow. The night lamp shed a rosy light over her. But, hark! Suddenly, in the silence of the room, a sound arose. The song! The song! Yes, it was indeed the song again. I heard it, the accursed thing. It was escaping from the sleeping lips of Margot.

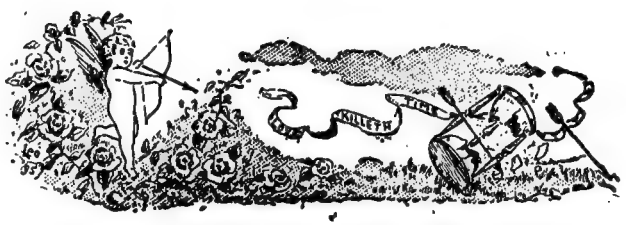
I sing it now, and dance to it all day.

The blood rushed to my brain, a shudder shook my frame. I raised my arm as if to strike. In the alcove above my head hung a massive silver crucifix. I nervously seized it. But the song had ceased. Nothing could be heard in the room but the calm breathing of the sleeper. How long did I lean over the poor victim, panting, suffocating, the crucifix uplifted ready to strike? I cannot tell. The clock struck hour after hour. "It shall not escape me again," I whispered to myself. And I watched Margot's lips as a bandit watches for the traveller whom he expects to pass that way. Now her silence irritated me beyond everything.

Ha! ha! at last. And scarcely has the first sound issued from those sleeping lips, than, brandishing the crucifix with both hands, and arms stretched at full length, I brought it down heavily upon Margot's head. With what a dull thud it struck the quivering flesh. Not a cry, not a moan! A few contractions twist her limbs. Her little hands beat the air, clutch the sheet. She becomes rigid, and moves no more. It is done. The song is silenced for ever.

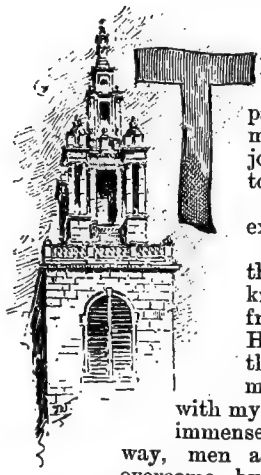
I believed it then. Alas! Margot is dead, the gentle, the innocent Margot. But the song still lives, more pitiless, more tormenting than ever. It has passed from Margot's soul into mine. I sing it now, and dance to it all day; I cannot help singing it. If I travel, it follows me; if I plunge into debauch, it follows me; if I lose myself in the crowd, it follows me. Everywhere I go, there it is also; it is as much a part of me as my flesh and blood. Oh, pity me! Denounce me! Deliver me to justice! Send me to the scaffold! Death, kind death alone can save me from this spectre, this vengeance of God—Margot's song.

N. N.



Digitized by Google

A DAUGHTER OF THE DESERT.



THE mess of the officers of the 2nd Chasseurs of Africa is particularly noisy. Their merriment runs high with shouts o joy and clanking glasses as they toast Lieutenant Henri Cursol.

"Now for the adventure!" exclaim the officers in chorus.

"With all my heart," replies the young lieutenant. "You know I left Mascara with orders from our chief to the *caïd* of the Havars about the incursions of the Tuaregs. I had accomplished my mission, and was returning with my platoon; crossing a part of the immense plain of sand. We kept on our way, men and animals, although nearly overcome by the intense heat, with our eyes partly closed, to avoid the reflection from the sand—a thousand times harder to endure than the heat of the sun. I was awakened from my torpor by an exclamation that came from behind me: '*El gueubeli!*'

"I turned round. The sergeant-major of my escort, an old African soldier, was pointing towards the horizon with excited gestures. The whole sky seemed to be covered by a thick cloud, resembling an immense column of smoke, touching the earth and reaching far into the heavens. '*El gueubeli*' was marching upon us with menacing strides.

"'Perhaps we can get ahead of it,' I said, ordering them to gallop.

"The serjeant-major shrugged his shoulders. 'So so wills,' he said.

"We started off at a furious rate, but the tempest came on at a still greater speed; a violent wind was upon us, sending blinding whirlwinds of dust into our eyes at every step of the horses. Our discomfited guides lost their bearings, and stopped. Our horses as well refused to move further; they came to a standstill, and braced themselves against the gusts of wind.

"I was leaning on my horse, when I felt him trembling under me; then, suddenly, I received a frightful shock; it seemed to me that thousands of pounds of sand fell, all at once, on my head. Stunned, scarcely able to think, I managed to struggle with my horse as he shook his bridle with rage, then raised himself on his hind legs and started off at a furious speed, taking me with him.

"The sand sifted into my eyes, my ears, and my nostrils, blinding and suffocating me. I could scarcely breathe; a burning thirst was consuming me; I felt that I was dying. I said a silent good-bye to all the happiness that I was losing for ever; then oblivion came, and I remember no more.

"When I came to myself I found that I was under a woollen tent, draped with alternate stripes of red and yellow silk, and lying on a rug which covered the entire floor of the tent. I experienced a strange sense of well-being, a state of drowsiness, a delightful feeling of laziness; and I closed my eyes quickly, not caring to understand how a lieutenant of Chasseurs was metamorphosed into an Arab, master of a large tent. All at once, it seemed to me, a brighter light struck my eyelids, and, at the same time, a pungent, penetrating perfume filled the tent.

"I opened my eyes, and saw standing at my bedside a young woman, with great fathomless eyes, surmounted by two delicately-pencilled arches. Her black, glossy hair fell in curls down her neck, covering her cheeks with their warm shadows. She was dressed like the daughter of a wealthy house—with a *haik* that fell to her feet, disclosing a chemise of striped silk, supported at the waist by a leather belt, studded with silver and held together at the breast with a clasp of the same metal. Two enormous silver and coral rings hung from her ears; her arms were loaded with bracelets, and her fingers were covered with heavy rings.

"Acting on the realistic impression of my dream, I greeted the beautiful apparition with a most profound salaam, which was returned with salaams and gracious smiles, the beautiful Saharian displaying a set of transparent teeth behind scarlet lips. I made as if to seize the young woman; but she recoiled, frightened, overthrew the lamp, and fled, leaving me somewhat abashed.

"A few moments later, just as the first rays of the new day stretched itself towards my tent, an Arab entered. His tall, slender silhouette stood out distinctly against the light, as with a haughty sweep of his hand he lifted the curtain that hung at the entrance. He advanced towards me, and, noticing that I was looking at him in surprise, but with regained consciousness, he began to speak in a jargon composed of bad Italian, worse French, a little Spanish, and a good deal of Arabic. He bowed to me and inquired after my health. I returned his greeting, and, calling to my aid the little of Arabic I knew, I asked him how it happened that I was under this tent.

"He informed me that I was in one of his camel-hair houses; that after the tempest—during which he had been nearly buried himself—when he was returning from Ouargla, where he had gone to buy a store of provisions, he noticed lying in the sand an officer, whom his people believed dead, but who, after a careful examination, was found to have fainted and to have been only partly asphyxiated. He had ordered me to be placed on one of his camels, between two sacks of wheat.

"He then told me that he was the Agha of the Cheragas, allies of the Si Sala and all the tribes not

Digitized by Google

submitted to our rule. I thanked him warmly, gave him my name, and asked him if I was his prisoner.

"'Why should you be. Your nation is not at war with mine. You are my guest, one whom God has sent me, fear nothing and get well. Here, drink this.' And this tall, handsome Arab handed me a cup of delicious coffee that renewed my strength and raised my spirits. He said that as soon as I should be able to stand the few hours' ride required to reach Mascara, he would see that I had the necessary escort. He gave orders to two tall negroes to aid me with my toilet; and those two giant valets proceeded to dress me in a fine garment of white wool, in which I must have looked like a priest of the Middle Ages.

"El Tahar ben Moussa showed me his village of tents and all his riches; from his working camels to his racing camels, whiter than snow and swifter than the wind; his horses; his provision tents filled with wheat, barley, oats, hashed meat mixed with cracked wheat, which the Arabs make into balls, and pots filled with dates that look like preserves; in fact, all that constitutes the fortune of an Arab, master of a large tent. He seemed much pleased by my admiration for his thoroughbreds and my compliments on the beauty of his son, a boy of ten years; but he took particular pains not to go near a certain tent, kept hermetically closed, but from which we could hear laughter and ejaculations.

"I was well enough acquainted with Arabian customs to know that I must not inquire about the women nor speak of my fair apparition. I was, however, quite hopeful of seeing her again, for I counted on feminine curiosity.

"At the dawn of the next day El Tahar came to excuse himself for leaving me alone a part of the day, as some expedition called him five or six leagues to the south. My aches and pains not having entirely subsided, and my great weakness still preventing me from accompanying the Agha, I could only witness his departure, followed by all of his horsemen; but with more joy than sorrow, I must own.

"The houri was continually in my mind, and I wished to see her. I prowled about the neighbourhood of the mysterious tent—I made an effort at least, for twice one of those giant valets, with menacing gestures, invited me to direct my promenade in another direction. Was I seen from the tent? Was my disappointment noticed? Annoyed and feverish, I lay down to take a nap, as is the custom in the village, when the beautiful Arab girl entered.

"She brought me a pitcher filled with a refreshing liquid that calmed my fever and quieted my nerves. We could scarcely understand each other, as I knew so little Arabic; but there are looks and gestures more eloquent than words.

"Our conversation was scarcely commenced. She had told me her name, and that she was the third wife of the Agha, when a great tramping of horses' feet was heard, and the barking of dogs filled us with terror. El Tahar had returned! How could she leave my tent without being seen? The wife of the Agha in the tent of a man, a Christian, and with her face unveiled! She wrung her hands in despair. The curtain, which served as a door, moved, lifted—she had just time to throw herself behind a wooden box, thinking herself concealed; but, alas! one of her little bare feet protruded from behind the box.

"The Agha entered, sat down, inquired about my health, spoke of the hunt. I seemed to be listening to his recital, but I could not understand anything. I replied at hazard. I was suffering torments; I could see nothing but the white foot, although I did not look at it.

"While speaking, El Tahar turned slightly. He could see it! I sat breathless. It seemed to me that the black eyes of the Agha—the only features of his face that I could see, for he had kept the black veil over his face, as do all the Tuaregs when away from home—glittered a moment as they fixed themselves upon the white spot; but I was mistaken, as he continued his recital quietly:

"As he rose to go he said somewhat solemnly: 'You are a guest whom God has sent me—I do not forget it.'

"I stood at the entrance of my tent as he moved away with slow and measured gait. The girl was obliged to wait until night before she could leave without being seen.

"An hour after this scene there was a great commotion in the village; a troop of cavalry had arrived. It was you, comrades, in search of my body, the sergeant-major and my men having carried to you the news of my certain death. You remember my reluctance to leave my tent and the manifest embarrassment in seeing you enter."

"Oh, yes. You didn't seem to be very happy over the effort we had made in searching you out, and the Agha himself was obliged to place you in the saddle after the feast he offered us."

Lieutenant Cursol's orderly entered the room just then.

"Lieutenant," he commenced.

"What do you wish?" asked Henri.

"There is a man outside who insists upon speaking to you, sir. A Tuareg. He wears his veil."

"A Tuareg? Tell him to come in."

"He will not dismount from his camel. He says he comes from yonder." And the soldier pointed in a direction over his shoulder to signify that it was some quite distant, uncertain place.

"Will you excuse me, gentlemen?"

"A message from his houri!" and the young officers rushed to the windows.

Before the steps was a camel, and sitting straight in his high seat was a Saharian, wrapped in a long bernouse, a black veil fastened under his eyes, and waiting motionless.

"I come from the Ouled Yakoud, and I bring to you a present from the Agha."

"A present for me?"

"Yes; here it is." And the Tuareg unfastened from his saddle a bag made from camel's hair.

He opened it and took out a black, hairy ball. He shook it, and from this head of hair appeared a bloodless face, with cold, blue lips, and eyes from whose orbs the light of life had for ever fled. It was a woman's head.

The Saharian flourished this head and threw it at the feet of the young man, who stood there as pale as Death himself.

"The Agha El Tahar ben Moussa sends this to you. Keep it." And, with a hoarse cry, the Tuareg started off at a wild gallop.

A month later, Lieutenant Henri Cursol was found one evening, within a few feet of one of the busiest streets of Mascara, lying dead with a dagger between his shoulders.

J. F.

Digitized by Google

[All Rights Reserved by the Author.

The Queen of Night.

By HEADON HILL,

Author of "Guilty Gold," "Zambra the Detective," "The Rajah's Second Wife," etc., etc.

SUMMARY.

Gaston Vizard gives to Sir Simon Crawshay an introduction to the agent of the vessel *Queen of Night*, in order that he may make special arrangements with regard to the trip of his wealthy ward, Miss Challenor. Dr. Zavertal calls on Vizard, and informs him that a new captain will be wanted before the next cruise.

The *Queen of Night*, under the guise of a popular pleasure boat, is used in reality by a set of unscrupulous adventurers for the purpose of doing away with objectionable relatives.

In Chapter I. Cyril Forrester receives his dismissal from the Flower Steamship Company for breaking regulations while saving the life of Miss Aline Challenor. He applies for and obtains from Nathan and Co., of Fenchurch Street, the vacant command of the ocean yacht *Queen of Night*.

Becoming engaged to Miss Challenor (who comes in for a quarter of a million on attaining her majority), he obtains an interview with Sir Simon Crawshay, who promptly refuses a consent to his engagement, and informs him that his ward will be out of his way for the next six weeks, as she is about to take a cruise on board the *Queen of Night!* On going aboard he is introduced to Dr. Zavertal, among whose patients are Miss Challenor, the Earl of Darranmore (a boy of fourteen coming into £40,000 a year), and Desmond Orlebar, whose death however occurs when off Gibraltar.

A stowaway is discovered and put ashore.

CHAPTER X.

A Detective's Holiday.

When the boat reached the steamer's side the day was breaking, and I was not sorry to see Zavertal leaning over the rail watching our approach. I had missed the point at the time, but it had since struck me as curious that there should have been no light in the Doctor's cabin, if the stowaway's story of having gone there for medical relief were true. The needful remedies could hardly have been found and dispensed in the dark, and I had begun to fear that the man's "seeckness" was only an excuse covering some sinister design, of which perhaps Zavertal himself was the victim. While striving in vain to recall where I had previously heard the stowaway's familiar voice, I had reproached myself for not ascertaining whether the Doctor was all right before I left the ship, and the sight of him there, peering down at us through the gloom, was a relief.

When the boat reached the steamer's side the day was breaking.

As soon as I had mounted to the deck he advanced to meet me with a look of undisguised inquiry, and I noticed that in the grey dawn-light his face seemed singularly puckered and old.

"There is nothing wrong, sir, I hope—to cause this deviation from our programme?" he said, rather stiffly for him.

"Oh, dear no," I replied. "I merely ran into Barcelona to send a private telegram. I thought it a good opportunity, too, to get rid of the stowaway." Having found Zavertal safe and sound, the thought flashed across me that as he was not a victim of Enriquez, he might be a partner with him in something underhand, and that, in any case, it would be more discreet to say nothing for the present of having seen the man leave the surgery or of his sudden proficiency in English. I watched the Doctor narrowly for any sign of satisfaction or the reverse at the news, but he yielded none; did not even evince any interest.

"That was just as well, I dare say," was his careless reply, and then he went on to say:

"I am rather glad you have touched here, for it will give me an opportunity of procuring some drugs of which I have run short. I suppose you have no objection to my taking a boat and going ashore for an hour? I will not keep you longer."

Heaven knows, I am not over sharp, but I was sharp enough to see that if there was anything in my theory that there might be some mysterious bond of union between Zavertal and the stowaway this might only be a try-on to effect a meeting, and I promptly refused the request.

"It is quite out of the question," I said; "we sail at once," and to prevent further argument I sang out to the officer on the bridge to get under weigh. The engine-room bell rang in response to his signal, and I had already begun to mount the bridge-ladder to personally con the ship out of harbour before Zavertal grasped that there was no appeal from my decision. Then he sprang forward and took steps up the ladder after me, his face quivering as he hissed in a tone I had never heard him use before:

"You are not doing well by yourself, Captain Forrester. You have exceeded your instructions to defer to me in matters of this kind. It is you who will suffer."

"Go to your cabin, sir, and behave yourself, or I will land you at Genoa," I said sternly. "You seem to forget that I command this ship."

He slunk away scowling, and I went to my duty feeling that I had rather scored than otherwise by provoking this exhibition of temper on his part. The intense irritation into which my refusal had betrayed him suggested that there was some stronger motive for his wishing to go ashore than the replenishment of his medicine chest, and if there was a secret motive I was glad to have thwarted him. At the same time, a feeling of uneasiness that there was some mystery on the ship, with which I could not cope because I was ignorant of its nature, grew upon me, and I longed for my unknown correspondent to reveal himself. The indications that his advice had not been altogether uncalled for implanted in me a reliance in his judgment, and I should have liked to have further availed myself of it.

I wondered, too, as I set the steamer's head N.E. by E. out of the bay, whether there was now to be an open breach between Zavertal and myself, and what effect a quarrel between us would have on the harmony of the voyage. I had been conscious for several days of an increasing suspicion that there was another side to the Doctor's character besides the one that he presented to the public, and though

Digitized by Google

"Go to your cabin, sir, and behave yourself.'

I didn't care twopence about his relations with myself, I hoped he would not show temper to the annoyance of the passengers.

So far as this was concerned, my apprehensions were soon set at rest. When we were clear of the headlands I turned in for a couple of hours, and while I was dressing for breakfast my steward brought me a few lines from the Doctor begging forgiveness for his "unwarrantable outbreak." He could only account for it, he wrote, by his not having been able to sleep, and he sincerely trusted it "would make no difference to the kindness I had extended to him since I had commanded the *Queen of Night*." On the surface this made matters smooth, and I sent him a verbal message that I should think no more of the incident—a polite fiction, I am afraid, seeing that all the morning I continued in grave doubt whether the deference and joviality which he lavished upon myself and upon the passengers respectively were really genuine.

General Waldo's place at the saloon breakfast-table was still vacant, and inquiries from his bedroom steward elicited the fact that his gout, though better, did not permit of his leaving his cabin. The absence of the snowy-haired, apple-cheeked veteran, with his merry jests and yarns, was the subject of universal regret; and, at the request of a passenger with whom I was walking the deck, I put my head into the surgery and asked Zavertal if he had seen the old gentleman.

"Yes," was the unexpected reply; "I saw him half an hour ago, but not professionally. He wanted me to witness his signature to a will he has been amusing himself with making. I don't think, from his appearance, that he is seriously ill, but he declined to describe his symptoms to me—on the grounds that he never consults medical men."

"He is a queer old fish," I remarked, and I was turning to resume my promenade with the passenger when Zavertal called after me:

"By the way, the General will send for you, sir, I expect, to be the second witness. He was saying something about a will witnessed by a captain and a doctor being unassailable."

Sure enough, I had not taken two turns on deck when a steward came up to say that General Waldo would be greatly obliged if I would step down to his state-room on a matter of private business. Apologising to my fellow-promenader, I went down to the main deck at once, anticipating nothing but amusement from the interview. And, certainly, on my entrance into the state-room, the occupant's rueful countenance, framed in a huge red night-cap, contemplating a swathed foot with an expression of malignant hatred formed a typical picture of the "gouty subject" calculated to provoke a smile. But at that point amusement ended for me, once for all, for the rest of the cruise, and if I laughed during the next fortnight, God knows it must have been forced laughter. All was to be blind mistrust and dark groping; while, beyond, the shadow of a more definite terror was in store for me.

The moment I was inside the cabin, and Waldo saw that I was alone, his face changed, and he motioned to me to close the door. "Lock it," he added, in a voice so new to him and yet so strangely familiar to me that I knew he must have been acting. Feeling that I stood on the brink of a disclosure, I obeyed mechanically, and then turned to him again.

"Sit down on the bed, Captain Forrester," he said—the pronounced American accent was no longer noticeable. "Never mind my foot; it is as well as your own. We must not remain too long together, so let me be brief. It was I who wrote that letter on which you so wisely acted."

I could only mutter something incoherent. I should have been surprised at learning that the anonymous letter emanated from Waldo, as I had known him; but a greater surprise had gripped me—at the marvellous change in the man's manner. So far it was in manner only.

"Yes," he went on, "and I will give you a very good reason for that warning directly, but first let me set you at your ease. I can see that you are struggling with a sort of half-remembrance of our last meeting. There—perhaps that will assist you."

As he spoke his hands went quickly to his head, and in a twinkling he had whipped off the red night-cap and the snowy mop of hair, showing *the close-cropped, iron-grey poll of Kennard, the missing passenger, whom I had met in Nathan's office.* By a second adroit movement he detached the bushy eyebrows and relaxed some tension of feature that com-

A typical picture of the gouty subject.

Digitized by Google

pleted a disguise so simple that only the proof I had received made me believe in its efficacy.

"I remember you very well," I said, "but what is the——?"

"The meaning of this masquerade?" he caught me up. "That is what you are here to learn. And in case of interruption I must prepare you by saying that the will you were to witness is as bogus as my gout—invented for the sole purpose of throwing dust in the very wide-open eyes of Doctor Zavertal. I wanted to talk to you alone, and I thought he would be less likely to suspect the real nature of our conversation if I furnished him with a spurious sample of it first. Do you happen to know if he took the bait?"

"I begin to think that Zavertal is a difficult man to read, but he gave me the impression of having believed you," I said. "He spoke rather contemptuously of the service you had asked of him, and he said that you intended to ask the same of me."

"Good," exclaimed Kennard, as I must now call him. "Now, as to that letter, I have not the slightest notion who Enriquez is, but I warned you against him because I believe that he came on board stowaway-fashion with Zavertal's knowledge and connivance, and Zavertal is without exception the most murderous villain as yet unhanged on God's earth. I am a detective, pretty well known on the other side of the Atlantic, and for the matter of that, on this, too, in certain circles, so that I do not speak without authority. I had him in my hands once, and he slipped through my fingers, or rather through one of the meshes in our sieve-like criminal code. The details of the case—I might say combination of cases—are immaterial here, but the man is one of the most expert professional poisoners who ever trafficked in human lives."

The close-cropped, iron-grey poll of Kennard.

"Good heavens!" I exclaimed. "Then why not denounce him and hand him over to the authorities at the next port?"

"So I should if I could find anything fresh against him, but old scores have been wiped off by the verdict of the American jury, and I should only burn my fingers by bringing vagues charges," replied Kennard. "I have noticed one or two suspicious circumstances during the voyage, and I may catch him tripping yet before it is over. I have the pull over him in this—that he does not suspect my identity, though he was a little uneasy about me on the first day, as I think you saw."

"Yes," I said. "But what was the reason for this disguise if, as you told me in Nathan's office, you are really on a holiday?"

Kennard smiled—not Waldo's senile grin, but his own sharp twinkle.

"Haven't you heard," he said, "that when an actor gets a night off he generally spends it at the theatre? Well, in the same way, when I chanced upon Zavertal on the stairs of Nathan and Co.'s office, I——"

"It was him, then, whom you met on the way out?" I interrupted. "I did not know he was about there."

"He was most certainly there, and drew a pistol on me under the impression that I was shadowing him," proceeded Kennard. "After that meeting I made a few inquiries, and found that he was medical officer on the very steamer in which I was contemplating a trip. Then it struck me that it would be interesting to combine business with pleasure, and see how Zavertal was behaving, whether he was really on the square, or working on the old lines. I saw that if I was to make discoveries it would be useless to appear on board *in propria persona*, and so I booked as the doddering old idiot who is regarded as a sort of ship's-fool. But thinking that you would probably have mentioned my intention of going the voyage to Nathan, if not to Zavertal himself, I took the precaution of booking a second passage in my own name, and then of forfeiting it."

"Your ruse has entirely misled him," I said. "But, strangely enough, yours was not the only forfeited passage," and I told him of the Mr. Vizard whom I had first seen in Zavertal's company on the day of my engagement, and of the latter's introduction of him to me as a perfect stranger on the occasion of my first visit to view the ship. I took the opportunity, too, in a shamefaced sort of way, of mentioning the sensation I had experienced in Nathan's office of having been watched by a pair of eyes of which, as soon as I saw them, Zavertal's instantly reminded me. Kennard did not laugh, as I had half feared, but, though he scanned my face seriously, passed on to say:

"Vizard's acquaintance with Zavertal can be considered later. At any rate, his name is not known to me in connection with the old affair. At present I am concerned with what has come under my own eyes, and made me thoughtful, if not exactly suspicious, since we left London. Item number one happened at dinner on the second day out, when young Darranmore was taken ill at table. You saw me get up and go over to where they had been sitting, after the boy's removal, under pretence of fetching a dish of pineapple? Well, that action was prompted by the sight of a piece of paper lying close to Zavertal's plate. What do you make of it?"

He handed me a strip of paper, on which was printed the one word:

"DIG."

"Look at the back," he added, with a smile at my blank stare of incomprehension.

"It seems to be a label," I said, after turning it over, and perceiving that the back was gummed.

"If, as I think, it is a druggist's label," replied Kennard, "the letters 'Dig' would be an abbreviation for 'Digitalis,' the name of a drug that specially affects the action of the heart, and which, given in sufficient quantities, is a deadly poison. Considering Zavertal's past record, the find led me to wonder whether Lord Darranmore's fainting-fit had an artificial origin."

"But the boy didn't die, and the Doctor worked hard on both occasions to bring him round. That wasn't the act of a poisoner," I remarked.

"My dear Captain Forester, I envy you your guilessness," returned Kennard. "Supposing Zavertal had anything to gain by doing away with the lad he would prepare the ground first by introducing a few fainting-fits just to allay suspicion when he administered a fatal dose. See; he has reaped the advantage already. He has furnished you with an argument in his defence."

I was obliged to admit his superior 'cuteness. "And where does the stowaway come in?" I asked.

"Ah, there you have me—at present," was the reply. "I ascertained, however, that in that game of hide-and-seek

Digitized by Google

Darranmore went and unearthed him from the launch on Zavertal's initiative, which looks very much as if the finding of the stowaway was an accident done on purpose. But it was a more definite circumstance that prompted me to write you that letter, and then to lay up here so that there should be no suspicion of collusion between us."

"And that circumstance was?". I asked.

"That the stowaway brought Desmond Orlebar his last drink, and then, by smashing the glass, destroyed all traces of its composition," replied Kennard gravely.

CHAPTER XI.

The Overland Arrival.

"You place upon me a very heavy responsibility as captain of this vessel," I said after a long pause. "Do I understand you to bring a charge of murder against Zavertal and Enriquez?"

"By no means; I have not adequate evidence to substantiate one," replied Kennard. "I am only putting you on your guard, so that there may be another pair of eyes besides my own to watch unceasingly. Don't disregard trifles. Why, on that day at Gibraltar I spotted Zavertal leading up to Orlebar's burst by pretending to persuade him to the contrary—a sure move with a man of the drunkard's temperament. I am positive that Zavertal intended him to slip the rest of the party."

"Preparing the ground again—by letting him drink himself ill," I hazarded.

"Precisely: but if so it was nearly overdone that time," replied Kennard. "The wretched fellow was so bad that he swore off, and by noon next day was a lot better. He told me so himself ten minutes before he died, though Zavertal described him to me as *in extremis*—a significant discrepancy. By the way did you have any trouble with Enriquez?"

I told him of the man's reappearance at the top of the landing-steps, of the pointed revolver, of the suddenly-acquired English, and of the strangely familiar sound of the voice in which the stowaway threatened me.

"All tends the same way, you see—to danger ahead from those two," said Kennard. "And so you cannot remember where you heard the voice before?"

"No, I can't place him."

"Well, I'll try and place him for you," proceeded Kennard, readjusting his disguise. "I won't risk making a wrong shot yet, but—first tell me when we are due to leave Genoa?"

"We arrive there at noon to-morrow, barring accidents, and leave the same time the following day," I replied.

"Then I think that within forty-eight hours I shall be able to tell you where you met the stowaway before. And now you have been here long enough. I am going to 'recover' this afternoon, so we shall meet at the dinner table, but at other times it will be well for us to be seen together as little as possible. I shall be at work in my own way, and you shall be posted in all fresh developments."

On leaving Kennard's cabin, I went straight to my own room, and shut myself in to review the position as calmly as I could. The more I looked at it the more I was convinced that there was absolutely nothing to be done. The American detective himself had said that there was no evidence—only suspicion—and a nice fool I should make of myself if I openly accused Zavertal of being engaged in a wholesale attempt to poison passengers.

Again, I could not safely suspend him on the grounds of his being a known bad character. Even by Kennard's showing he had been acquitted of the charge that had been brought, and he had been trusted by the owners long before they had heard of me. Further, Kennard was just as much a stranger to me, and, for all I knew, quite as likely to be a scoundrel, with some ulterior object of his own in view, as was Zavertal. It was true I was prepossessed in the American's favour, while I had come to distrust the Doctor; but against this, there was the set-off of the former being a disguised man travelling under an *alias*—hardly a recommendation for implicit confidence.

And yet it was a horrible strain to think that Kennard's story of the past, and fears for the future, might *not* be baseless, and that we might have a murderer in our midst with a roving commission to destroy life. Kennard had only mentioned suspicions in two cases, and it was strange that these were two out of the three which Zavertal had indicated as serious on the first day out. I started in terror at the thought that the third was Aline herself, and it flashed upon me that Zavertal might have named these three cases in order to pave the way for the fatal termination he meant to secure. And yet where was the motive—what could be the inducement for his turning his hand against three utterly unconnected strangers who could never have injured him?

The problem was beyond me; but I found temporary comfort in one thing, that for forty-eight hours at least there would be no fear of mischief. Granting that there was real danger, Zavertal would not dare to strike a fatal blow till he was able to avail himself of sea burial, and that would not be till after we should have sailed from Genoa two days hence. In the meanwhile I decided not to depend too much on Kennard, but to keep a good lookout all round on my own account, and if anything occurred which, in my judgment as captain of the ship, called for instructions from the owners I could cable Nathan from Genoa.

But during the ensuing twenty-four hours nothing happened to mar the serenity of the voyage as the *Queen of Night* cut through the blue waters that wash the southern shores of France. Past rock-girt Monaco, under the brow of Cap Martin, within sight of the orange groves of the Riviera, we steamed merrily, no sign of the black care that filled the heart of the Captain finding place amid the racket of festivity that prevailed on board. Kennard, in his resumed character of General Waldo, gave no fresh warning, and the Doctor pervaded the ship with his genial forethought for the comfort of all.

As for sickness there was none on board, Lord Darranmore having quite recovered from his last fit, and in short, as I whispered to Kennard next morning, there was no peg to hang a rag of suspicion on.

"Wait," he said quietly, and turned away.

We were steaming steadily for the Molo Vecchio as he spoke, Genoa, the Superb, being well in sight ahead, rising tier above tier on its amphitheatre of hills, from the bustling thriving streets of the port in front to the stately groups of palaces beyond. The passengers were all on deck, forming parties and making plans to visit the picture

Supported only by a clergyman and a couple of old maids.

Digitized by Google

galleries and palaces of the ancient city; but on this occasion I meant to remain on board, influenced, I am not ashamed to say, by the fact that Aline and Mrs. Brinkworth had expressed their intention of not going ashore. They had not yet sufficiently forgotten the unpleasant incident at Gibraltar to be anxious for more sight-seeing.

We came to an anchor half an hour after noon, and the shore parties lost no time in leaving the ship. Neither Kennard or Zavertal had confided their plans to me, though I expected that the latter would be certain to attach himself to one of the parties in his usual capacity of showman and master of the ceremonies. When luncheon was served in the nearly deserted saloon it was, therefore, a surprise to see him seated at the head of his table, supported only by a clergyman and a couple of old maids who disliked getting in and out of boats. At my own table only Aline and her companion took their places, though half-way through the meal another surprise was forthcoming in the entrance of "General Waldo," who explained that a twinge of gout had warned him at the last moment to stay on board.

"Quite right, General," Zavertal called across from the other table; "I, too, am taking a rest to-day. We will have a game of chess together after tiffin if you like."

But, though Kennard assented in his feigned voice and pronounced drawl, the game was not destined to come off between them—at least, not over a chess-board. A minute or two later a steward brought Zavertal a letter, and informed him that it had been brought by a boat from the shore. After hurriedly reading it the Doctor came over to us and said: "I must go ashore after all, I find. I have just heard from an old student friend of mine that he is staying in Genoa for a few days, and he wants me to spend an hour or two with him at the Hotel de Genes. Our game of chess must be postponed, I am afraid, General."

There was a trace of suppressed excitement in his tone, and he turned and left the saloon at once. Kennard exchanged a meaning glance with me, but finished a yarn with which he was amusing Aline without making any reference to the Doctor's altered arrangements. When we all adjourned to the upper deck I clearly made out Zavertal a quarter of a mile away in a shore-boat that was being rapidly pulled to the nearest landing-steps, and, turning to call "Waldo's" attention to the fact, I found that the detective had disappeared.

Hurriedly reading it.

Ten minutes afterwards I was passing forward to speak to the chief engineer, when I was accosted by a shabby, foreign-looking man, who might have been an Italian opera tout or vendor of curios. I had given strict orders for none of these gentry to be allowed on board, and was on the point of letting the stranger have "a bit of the skipper's tongue," when he checked me with a whispered injunction to "keep calm."

"Kennard?" I stammered.

"Yes," he said. "I am off to shadow our friend the Doctor. There's something in the wind. He was waiting for that letter. Expect me back when you see me—in the character of Waldo, of course. I am taking the needful make-up along," touching a black handbag he carried. "When he returns I shan't be far behind him. Don't relax your vigilance, Captain, because the enemy is absent. He may be represented, for all we know."

"Kennard," I stammered.

He was over the side and into a shore-boat before I could reply, and to tell the truth I was nearly as glad to be rid of him as of the Doctor, with his disguises and mystery-making. After settling matters with the engineer, I went aft and spent the happiest time of the whole voyage, sitting with Aline under the awning all the sunny afternoon, while Mrs. Brinkworth played propriety.

Aline was particularly anxious to extract a promise from me to give up the sea after our marriage, but though she worked hard to secure it, she failed to shake my determination not to be dependent on my wife's bounty. I was in the midst of an argument on the loss of self-respect that would arise from such a position, when the first boat laden with returning sightseers came alongside.

Mrs. Brinkworth played propriety.

Two minutes later the voice of someone who had approached us silently startled me into a sense of present realities.

"Good evening, Captain Forrester," the new-comer was saying. "Better late than never, you see. I missed you before, but rather than lose the trip altogether, I have hurried on overland to join you here."

It was Vizard, the passenger who had failed to put in an appearance when we left London, who was standing before us. His tall, commanding figure was set off by a well-cut tourist suit, and he carried an expensive travelling-rug over his arm. His swarthy face looked courteously down at us, and he raised his hat in recognition of Aline's presence.

But for all that I was certain that there was no mistake. I recognised his voice at once. It was the voice which had been puzzling me for the last three days—*the voice in which Enriquez, the stowaway, had threatened me from the landing-steps in the harbour of Barcelona.*

(To be continued.)

POSTAL RATES.

Short Stories will be sent direct from these offices, post free, to any country within the Postal Union, at the following rates, prepaid:

One Year	6s. 6d.
Half Year	3s. 3d.
Three Months	1s. 8d.

Printed and Published by C. Arthur Pearson, at "Pearson's Weekly" Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

CANCER
IS NOT INCURABLE.

Of the many cases treated by the "Hudson" process only one has proved fatal while under treatment. In External Cancer the whole growth is completely extracted. The following is from a letter received in 1872: "*The cancer which was on my Father's lip is almost well now; the roots came away nicely, and it is skinned over.*" A son of this gentleman wrote the other day that his father died twenty-two years after, and never had any return of the disease. Correspondence from those interested is invited.

Mr. HUDSON,
12, York Bldgs., John St., Adelphi, London, W.C.

SULPHOLINE LOTION

For clearing the skin from Spots, Blemishes, Redness, Roughness, giving a Beautiful Complexion and pleasing appearance.

SHILLING BOTTLES.

DEVONSHIRE CREAM.
(REALLY GENUINE)

In patent air-tight tins, ½lb., 1s. 2d.; 1lb., 2s.; 2lbs. 3s. 9d., including tin and postage.
MRS. CONYERS,
Kilkhampton, Stratton, N. Devon.

ONE BOX
OF
DR. MACKENZIE'S IMPROVED HARMLESS COMPLEXION WAFERS.

will produce the most lovely complexion that the imagination could desire. Clear, Fresh, freed from Blotch, Blemish, Coarseness, Redness, Freckles, or Pimples. Sent post free, 4s. 6d. *Beware of so-called Complexion Pills being advertised by unscrupulous imitators under the name of Dr. Mackenzie. These Wafers are not pills.*

To whiten the hands and skin, use
Dr. Mackenzie's Arsenical Toilet Soap.
1s. per tablet, 3 for 2s. 6d. Postage, 3d.
S. HARVEY,
5, DENMAN STREET, LONDON BRIDGE, S.E.
(Removed from Balham Hill.)

AJAX BEST AND CHEAPEST OVER 1,000 New and Second-hand. EASY TERMS—From 10s. per month. Lists (200 pages) and Testimonials post free. BRITISH CYCLE MANUFACTURING CO., Liverpool; 45, Everton Road, and 42, High Street, Camden Town, London, N.W. (close to Euston Road).

CAMBRIC POCKET HANDKERCHIEFS

Bordered.	per doz	*Hem-stitched.*	per doz.
Children's	1/3		
Ladies',	2/3	Ladies',	2/9
Gents',	3/3	Gents',	3/11

Direct from the Manufacturers

"The Irish Cambrics of Messrs. ROBINSON & CLEAVER have a world-wide fame." *The Queen.*

Samples and Price Lists Post Free.

LINEN COLLARS, CUFFS, AND SHIRTS.

Collars, Ladies' 3-fold, 3/6 per doz. Gents' 4-fold, 4/11 per doz.
Cuffs for Ladies or Gentlemen from 5/11 per doz.

Shirts, Best quality Long Cloth, with 4-fold Linen Fronts, 35/6 per ½ doz. (to measure 2/- extra).

"Exquisite quality, most moderate in price."—*Myra's Journal.*

(By Special Appointments to the Queen and Empress Frederick of Germany.)

ROBINSON & CLEAVER, BELFAST.

TO TOBACCONISTS COMMENCING.

£20 See Illus. Guide and Catalogue (259 pages), 3d. "How to Open a Clear Stores, £20 to £2,000." TOBACCONISTS' OUTFITTING CO., 186, Euston Road, London. (Over 50 years' reputation.) Manager, H. MYERS.

IMPORTANT TO LADIES. Valuable and never failing remedies for all irregularities and obstructions, however obstinate or long standing, and never fail to bring about the desired result. These really wonderful medicines are without parallel in medical science; they preserve health, and have saved thousands trouble, illness, and expense; heaps of unsolicited testimonials. Send at once stamped envelope for most invaluable particulars. (The only effectual remedy on earth.)

A. DASMAIL,
52, LANGDALE, WALTHAMSTOW.
(Established 1851.)

INDIA RUBBER STAMPS.

For heading Notepaper, endorsing Envelopes, Cheques, and Postal Cards, Marking Linen, etc. Monograms—two letters, 1s. each; three letters, 1s. 6d. each, full name in neat type, 1s. 4d. each. Postage, 3d. Self-inkers, from 2s. each.

Patterns and Price Lists post free.
Stamps are on brass mounts with black handles.
JOHN BERKLEY,
8, Livery Street, Birmingham.

New Harrison. SWIFT GOLD MEDAL.

KNITTER

KNITS STOCKINGS (Ribbed or plain) GLOVES and CLOTHING in WOOL, SILK, or COTTON. INSTRUCTIONS FREE. Lists free per post. 25 Triumphant Awards, including 7 Gold Medals for the "HARRISON" and "SUN" Machines.

HARRISON KNITTING MACHINE CO., Ltd., Works: 48, Upper Brook St., Manchester.

HAIR DESTROYED.

A lady who has permanently destroyed Superfluous Hairs on herself, will be happy to forward free, to all similarly afflicted, full particulars of a simple, inexpensive and harmless self-treatment. Send stamped addressed envelope in confidence to Mrs. "T. D.," 17, Strand, London.

HAIR DESTROYED.

Absolutely, permanently, painlessly (without extraction, or burning, or cutting off), and without injury to the skin, **or no charge made.** Inquiries confidentially solicited. Particulars and testimonials from hospital nurses and others, free. Address Mrs. E. GOULD, 129, New Kent Road, London, S.E.

BLUSHING.

A lady, whose daughter was cured of this in less than a month, will be happy to send particulars to anyone inclosing stamped addressed envelope to Mrs. WILLIAMS, No. 1, County Chambers B., Martineau St., Birmingham.

TO LADIES.

English Wives should send at once for SPECIAL TREATISE and PRICE LIST of SURGICAL APPLIANCES. Advised by the Medical Faculty throughout the world. Apply, inclosing stamped addressed envelope.—M. D., 217, GRAHAM ROAD, LONDON, N.E. Please name this paper.

BLUSHING

Permanently cured. A Pamphlet giving sound practical advice and particulars of a successful treatment for a rapid, simple, and inexpensive home-cure, forwarded free to all upon receipt of stamped addressed envelope.—Prof. R. V. HOLT, Argyll Chambers, West Strand, London.

HAIR DESTROYED

permanently and absolutely by an entirely new and harmless self-treatment, total destruction guaranteed. Particulars free on receipt of stamped addressed envelope. Prof. F. T. HOLT, Argyll Chambers, West Strand, London.

BLACKHEADS. I guarantee to cure the most stubborn cases when all else has failed. Book of particulars for an inexpensive, harmless, permanent, and certain home cure, post free on receipt of stamped addressed envelope to Mrs. V. EVANS, 18, Union Passage, Birmingham.

DEAFNESS, HEAD NOISES, &c., ABSOLUTELY CURED in 24 hours, by using one bottle of "Auraline Essence," the Great Indian Discovery. Millions of sufferers cured after all else had failed. Many testimonials. Why remain deaf when a cure awaits you? Send 2/9 to the MACKAY REMEDY CO., 104, High Holborn, London.

A BOON TO LADIES.

Collins' Marvellous Female Remedy.

Mr. COLLINS [who was 30 years a member of the Royal College of Surgeons of England] will forward, free of Charge, full PARTICULARS of a REMEDY, which during an extensive practice both at home and in the Colonies he has never known to fail in the most OBSTINATE CASES of OBSTRUCTION and IRREGULARITIES. Send addressed envelope for full particulars, and waste no more time and money on useless Pills and so-called Remedies, etc., which, in the majority of cases, are nothing but PURGATIVES, and cause SICKNESS, PROSTRATION, and PAIN, without having the desired effect.

Letters to be addressed—
D. COLLINS,
GOTHIC HOUSE, 9, ERSKINE STREET,
LIVERPOOL.

RED NOSES

caused by Indigestion, etc. All who suffer from this distressing and disfiguring complaint should write to Dr. HOWELL, 22, Glasshouse Street, W., who guarantees a Cure in a few days. 2/6 per box.

MUCH BETTER THAN STEEL AND PENNYROYAL.

OTTEY'S Unlabelled strong FEMALE PILLS Quickly and Certainly remove all obstructions arising from any cause whatever. Invaluable for married women. Post free, under cover, for 14 and 33 stamps, from
THOMAS OTTEY, Chemist, Burton-on-Trent.
Please mention this paper.

TOOTH-ACHE

CURED INSTANTLY BY

BUNTER'S Prevents Decay. Saves Extraction. Sleepless Nights Prevented.

Neuralgic Headache and all Nerve Pains Removed by BUNTER'S NERVINE. All Chemists, 1s. 1½d.

NERVINE

GIVEN AWAY £5,000!

GRAHAM & CO.'S MONSTER GIFTS.

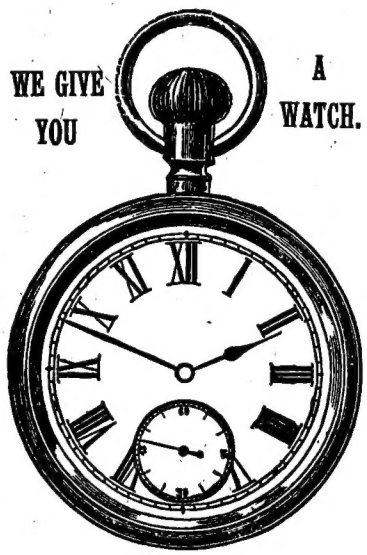
IMPORTANT NOTICE.—Messrs. GRAHAM & CO. intend to present their Customers with a Monster Parcel as a means of advertising their celebrated

EGYPTIAN GOLD JEWELLERY.

For the small sum of **6s. 6d.** we will send as follows:—

NOT A TOY

WE GIVE YOU A WATCH.



	Our Price.	
One Gent's Egyptian Gold Albert, or one Lady's Egyptian Gold Albert	2s. 6d.	FOR 6s. 6d.
One Seal or Locket for Chain	1s. 6d.	
One Gent's Carbon Diamond Ring, or one Lady's 5-stone Diamond Ring	3s. 6d.	
One Gent's Carbon Diamond Scarfpin, or one Lady's Fashionable Brooch	2s. 6d.	
One Pair of Cuff Links, or one Carbon Diamond Bracelet ...	2s. 6d.	
Total	12s. 6d.	

In addition to the above Every Purchaser will be Presented Free of Charge with one of our handsome

KEYLESS WATCHES.

USUALLY SOLD AT HALF-A-GUINEA.

Read what is said by those who have purchased.

WANTS A SECOND PARCEL.

Lowick-by-Neale, Northumberland, August 17.

GENTLEMEN,—Received to-day your second parcel of jewellery, with which we are immensely pleased. We really wonder how you can do it. The watch itself is worth more than the money charged for the whole. Many thanks for punctuality.—Very truly yours, WILLIAM McISAAC.

GOES BETTER THAN HIS £15 WATCH.

11, North Street, St. Peters, Tunbridge Wells.

GENTLEMEN,—Some few weeks ago I sent to your firm for the jewellery and advertised watch, of which I am surprised; the *watch* is a beautiful timist. I must admit, in fact, it goes better than my £15 gold watch; and for the jewellery it is astonishing value. I think you must lose money over such gifts, as I term it. The watch alone is worth double the 7s. I enclosed. I have shown it to several of my friends, and they were astonished. You can add this to your testimonials if it will be of any service.—I am, Gentlemen, yours faithfully, LEWIS C. RHODES.

GUARANTEED TO KEEP CORRECT TIME.

Any Watch not received in going order will be exchanged.

Every Watch is Carefully Examined, Timed, and Guaranteed a Correct Timekeeper. Call and see them.

We do this to save the enormous cost of advertising, preferring to give our customers the benefit. As we lose money on each parcel we cannot supply more than two parcels to one person. If you cannot call get a P.O. at once, and send for this wonderful parcel. Orders will be executed in Rotation. **MONEY RETURNED IF NOT AS REPRESENTED.**

NOTE.—The entire parcel will be sent for 6s. 6d. (post free, registered, 7s.). Each customer will receive gratis one of our HANDSOMELY ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUES. Be sure and call or send to-day for the

6s. 6d. Monster Presentation Parcel including the Handsome Keyless Watch.

S. S. GRAHAM & CO., 277, STRAND, LONDON, W.C.

Digitized by Google